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'KEEP 'EM FLYIN'!

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No. 53

CAPTAIN



AERO

COMICS



'KEEP 'EM FLYIN'!

**NO. 2
FEB.**

CAPTAIN



AERO

COMICS



We Present with Great Pride A New Comic Magazine

"CAPTAIN AERO" COMICS

We Feel That the Characters Created For This Magazine

"CAPTAIN AERO" and "THE FLAGMAN"

as well as the other characters introduced in this issue, will find favor with the readers of comic adventure magazines. Our writers and artists have promised us that with every new issue new and thrilling stories as well as absorbing and breathtaking pictures will be brought to you, full of action, thrilling adventure and daring.

We Know That Every Reader Will Want To Be A Member Of

CAPTAIN AERO'S SKY SCOUTS

NEW! THRILLING! DARING! FULL OF ACTION!
WATCH FOR EVERY ISSUE

C'MON KIDS! GET YOUR WINGS!



SENSATIONAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF
FULL DETAILS AND ENTRY BLANK IN
THE NEXT
ISSUE
OF **CAPTAIN AERO** COMICS

BE AIRMINDED! JOIN THE
SKY SCOUTS

ORGANIZE YOUR OWN LOCAL
PATROL! COMPLETE INFORMATION
NEXT MONTH! WATCH FOR IT!

VOL. 1—No. 8

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FEBRUARY, 1941

KEEP 'EM FLYIN'!

CAPTAIN AERO

MIDNIGHT—HEAVY
RAIN PELTS DOWN—
SKIES OVERCAST—
MOTORS ROAR AND
SPIT— THEN ROAR
AGAIN—BOMBERS
FOR BRITAIN WITH
CEILING ZERO—
DEATH AND DANGER
ON EVERY SIDE—
THUMBS UP—THEY
MUST GET THROUGH—
THEY'RE OFF—THE
MEN WHO FLY—
TRAIL BLAZERS OF
THE LAST FRONTIER!

BY
ALLEN ULMER
and
**CHAS. M.
QUINLAN**





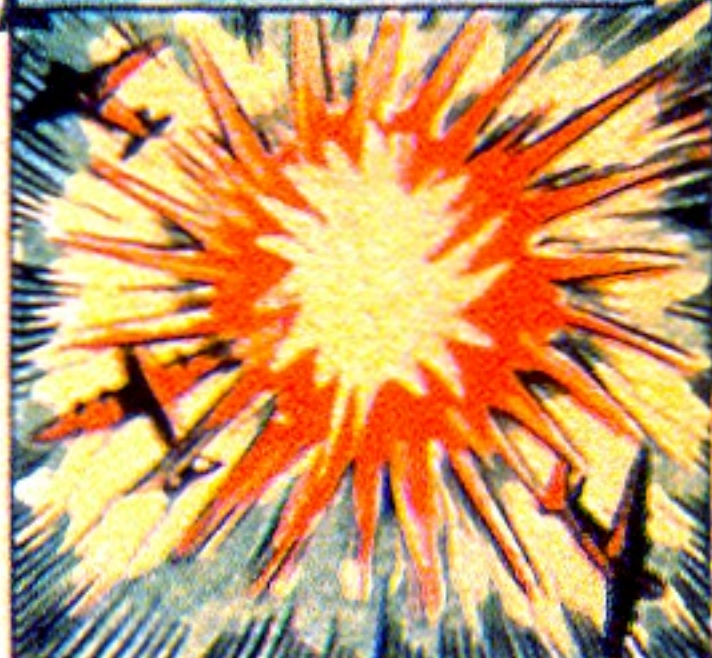
INSIDE THE GIANT PLANES, STARTLED PILOTS CLUTCH AT THEIR THROATS IN AGONIZED DISMAY...



THE BLUE BEAM GLOWED BRIGHTER AND BRIGHTER, SECTIONS OF THE PLANES MELT AWAY...



...SPED BRIGHTLY, THERE IS A BLINDING FLASH...



THEY WERE PLANNED TO DESTROY THE CITY OF NEW YORK...



THEY WERE PLANNED TO DESTROY THE CITY OF NEW YORK...



THEY WERE PLANNED TO DESTROY THE CITY OF NEW YORK...

METAL THAT ONLY A FEW SECONDS BEFORE WERE GIANT FLYING BOMBERS BUILT TO BE ALMOST INVINCIBLE IN MODERN WARFARE.





THE FOLLOWING DAY AT THE NATION'S CAPITOL!



AND HERE'S THE REPORT, SIR—TWENTY BOMBERS ON THEIR WAY TO ENGLAND DISBURGATED OVER NEW YORK CITY—CAUSE NOT YET KNOWN!

CAUSE NOT YET KNOWN! THAT'S WHAT THEY SAID ON THE LAST REPORT—FORTY THREE PLANES HAVE BEEN DEMOLISHED BUT HOW? WHAT IS BEHIND THIS INCREDIBLE MENACE! WE MUST FIND OUT CAPTAIN, WE MUST!



INVESTIGATIONS HAVE ALREADY BEEN MADE, SIR—I ASSIGNED A MAN WHOSE AVIATION BACKGROUND DATES HIM AMONG THE BEST—IN MY JUDGMENT HE IS THE ONLY PERSON WHO CAN CRACK THIS CASE!

WELL, WHO IS HE, CAPTAIN? IF HE'S HERE, SHOW HIM IN—WE MUST GET STARTED IMMEDIATELY!



SHOW AGENT X-3 IN, PLEASE!



SIR, I WANT YOU TO MEET SECRET AGENT X-3—BETTER KNOWN THE WORLD OVER AS CAPTAIN AERO! A FAMOUS PILOT WHO IS HELPING AMERICA FERRY BOMBERS TO ENGLAND!



I'VE HEARD A GREAT DEAL ABOUT YOU ALSO—THE CAPTAIN HAS PICKED A WORTHY MAN! YOU ARE FAMILIAR OF COURSE, WITH THE TRAGIC EVENTS THAT HAVE OCCURRED—BRITAIN NEEDS OUR HELP NOW AND NOTHING MUST STOP US!



I REALIZE THAT, SIR, AND WE HAVE A LEAD ON THIS BLUE BEAM—IT MAY BE A NEW TYPE OF WEAPON THAT HAS BEEN PERFECTED TO NIGHT I'M LEAVING FOR THE CARIBBEAN, AND IF MY CALCULATIONS ARE RIGHT, WE'LL GET THE FIELDS BEHIND THIS DEADLY BEAM!



I HOPE SO, AERO! THE GOVERNMENT WILL CO-OPERATE IN ANY WAY NEEDED—GOOD LUCK, CAPTAIN, YOU KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS TO US!

THANK YOU, SIR, I'LL DO MY BEST!

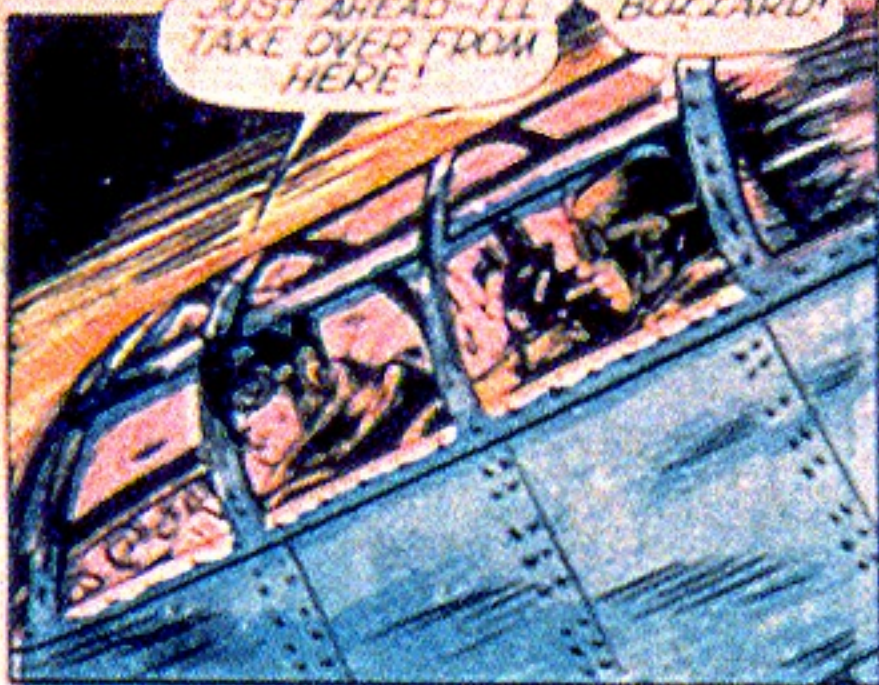
THAT NIGHT, WITH THE CAPTAIN'S PERSONAL ASSISTANT, CAPTAIN AERO, TAKES OFF FROM THE ARMY AIRFIELD, DOING THE "BLUE BEAM"!



SEVERAL
HOURS
LATER

ALL RIGHT PROP
THE ISLAND IS
JUST AHEAD—I'LL
TAKE OVER FROM
HERE!

OKAY CAP!
SHE'S YOUR
BUZZARD!



SUDDENLY, THE DREAD BLUE
RAY CUTS ACROSS THE SKY—
DIRECTLY IN THEIR PATH—



THE BLUE
BEAM!
QUICK, HIT
THE SILK!



AS THE BLUE RAY BUILDS UP
THEIR PLANE THE TWO AMERICAN
DIVE OUT OF THE COCKPIT



...AND PLUNGE INTO THE
DARKNESS



THE UNCONTROLLED PLANE
ENTER THE BEAM OF LIGHT
AND IN A FEW SECONDS
DISOLVES INTO MOLTEN METAL



BY CAREFUL MANEU-
VERING, THEY LAND
THEIR CHUTES ON A
NEARBY ISLAND...



WHEN THAT
WAS CLOSE!

YEAH, BUT—I
DON'T LIKE THE
LOOKS OF THINGS!
NOBODY IS OPERATING
THAT DEATH RAY IS
SOMEWHERE
NEAR THIS
ISLAND!



YOU ARE RIGHT, KAPITAN,
AND IT SHALL BE YOUR
MISFORTUNE TO MEET
THAT PERSON—THIS
WAY—AND MAKE
NO TROUBLE!

WHA--!





BUT CAPTAIN AERO'S SMASHING BLDWS
WREAK HAVOC ON THE ENEMY SOLDIERS!



HERE'S MY
SLEEPER PUNCH
LET ME KNOW
WHEN YOU
WAKE UP!

COME ON LOOPS WE'VE
GOTTA FIND THE LEAD-
ER OF THIS OUTFIT
IN A HURRY!

I'M RIGHT WITH
YA CAP!



SUDDENLY THE BLUE RAY
FLASHES DIRECTLY ACROSS
THEIR PATH!



WE'RE
TRAPPED!



RIGHT CAPTAIN! NOW IF
YOU WILL WALK TOWARDS
THE BARRACKS WITHOUT
MAKING TROUBLE, YOU WILL
BE SPARED
A HORRIBLE
DEATH!

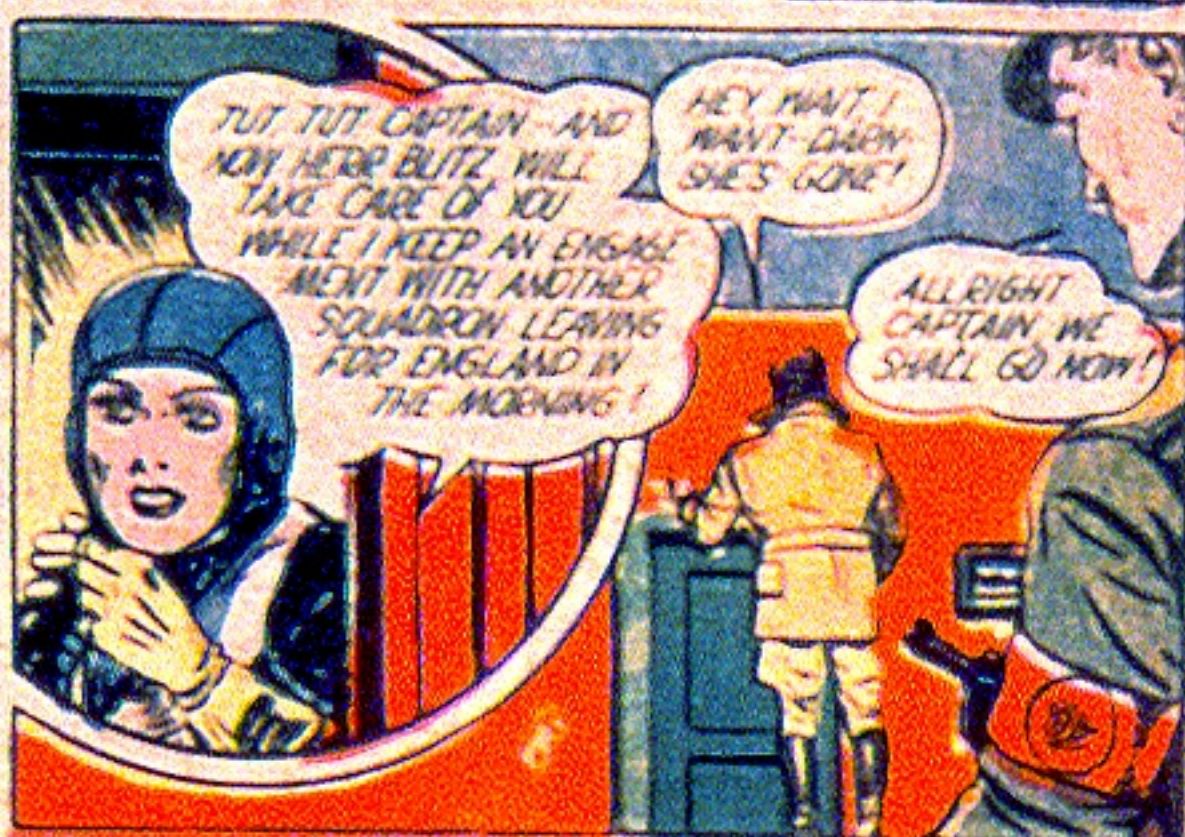


ALLRIGHT RAT NOW THAT
WE'RE PRISONERS MAY I
ASK WHAT YOU INTEND
DOING WITH US!?!



THAT MY YANKEE FRIENDS,
THE BLUE FALCON
SHALL DECIDE!





MEANWHILE THE BLUE FALCON TAKES OFF FROM THE ISLAND ON HER MISSION OF DESTRUCTION.



HURR! --- WE'VE GOT TO STOP HER FROM GETTING AT THOSE BOMBERS!



HOLD IT! THERE'S A PLANE!

YEAH BUT THE GUARD MAY NOT WANT US TO TAKE IT!

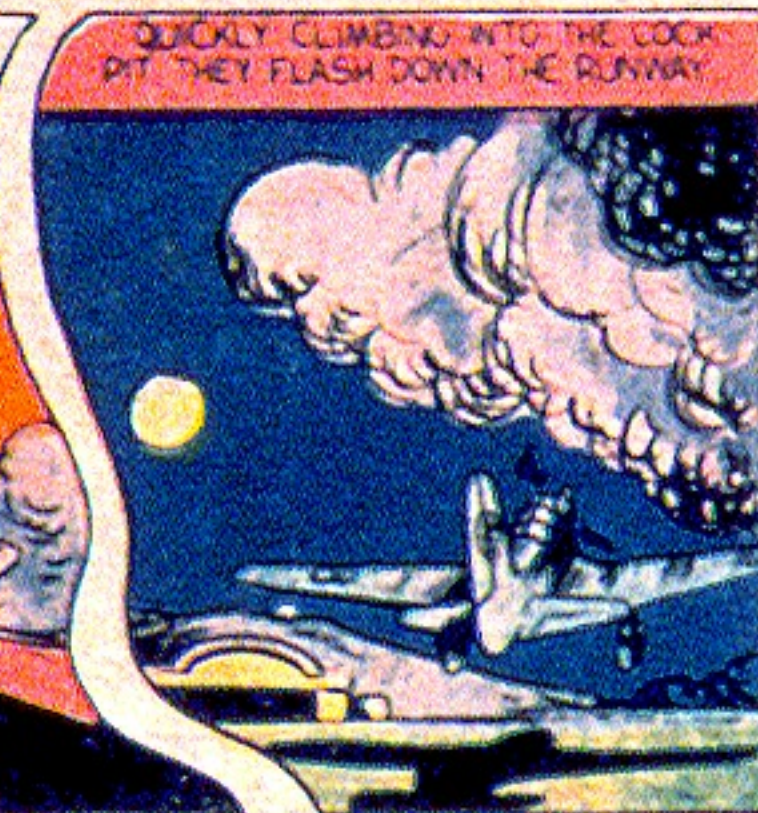
HALT!



SORRY CHUM, I'VE GOT A PLANE TO CATCH!



QUICKLY CLIMBING INTO THE COCKPIT THEY FLASH DOWN THE RUNWAY.



HE SAID THIS ISLAND IS GUARDED BY THE BLUE BEAM-HUH WE HAVE ABOUT ONE CHANCE IN A THOUSAND OF GETTING OUT IN ONE PIECE!



AS AERO CLIMBS INTO THE CLOUDS THE BLUE BEAM SWEEPS UP AFTER THE ESCAPING PAIR!

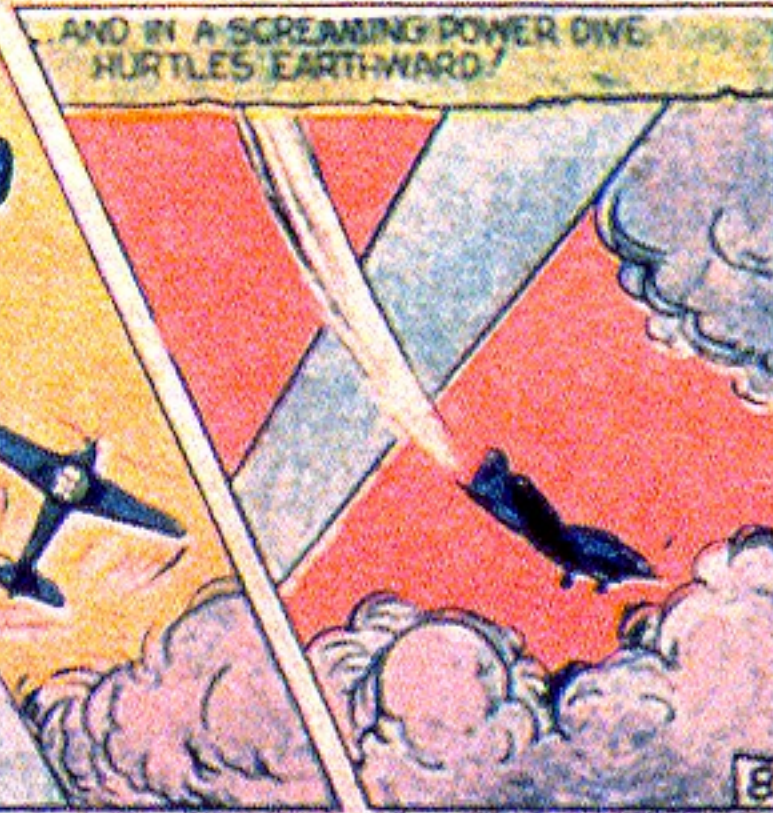


AND IMMEDIATELY A SQUADRON OF NAZI PLANES TAKE OFF IN PURSUIT!

SUDDENLY GOING INTO A LOOP THE MASTER PILOT COMPLETELY ENCIRCLES THE DESTRUCTIVE RAY.



AND IN A SCREAMING POWER DIVE HURTTLES EARTH-WARD!



WITH HIS LANDING GEAR BRUSHING THE TREE TOPS, HE STREAKS OUT OF RANGE OF THE DEADLY RAY...



REACHING THE EDGE OF THE ISLAND, HE BANGS SHARDLY AND PLUNGES INTO THE WATER.

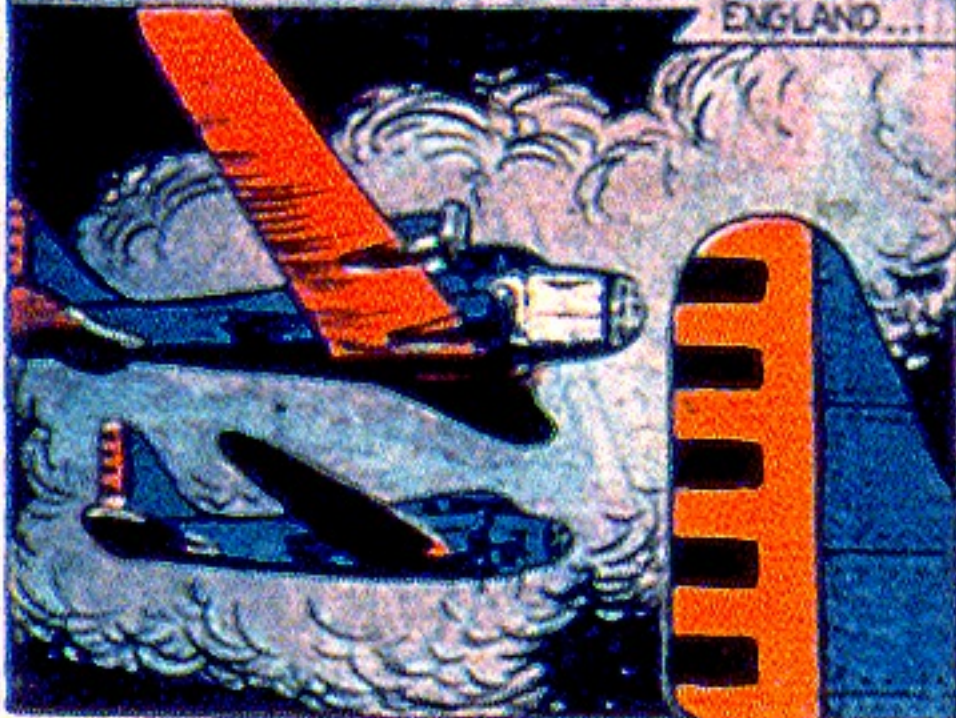


WE MADE IT!
WE MADE IT!

WELL, WELL!
YOU DON'T SAY!



MEANWHILE, MILES AWAY, ANOTHER MIGHTY ARMADA OF FLYING FORTRESSES LEAVE AMERICA BOUND FOR ENGLAND...



HOURS LATER FAR OUT OVER THE ATLANTIC, A LONE PLANE SUDDENLY DIVES DOWN AMONG THE BOMBERS.



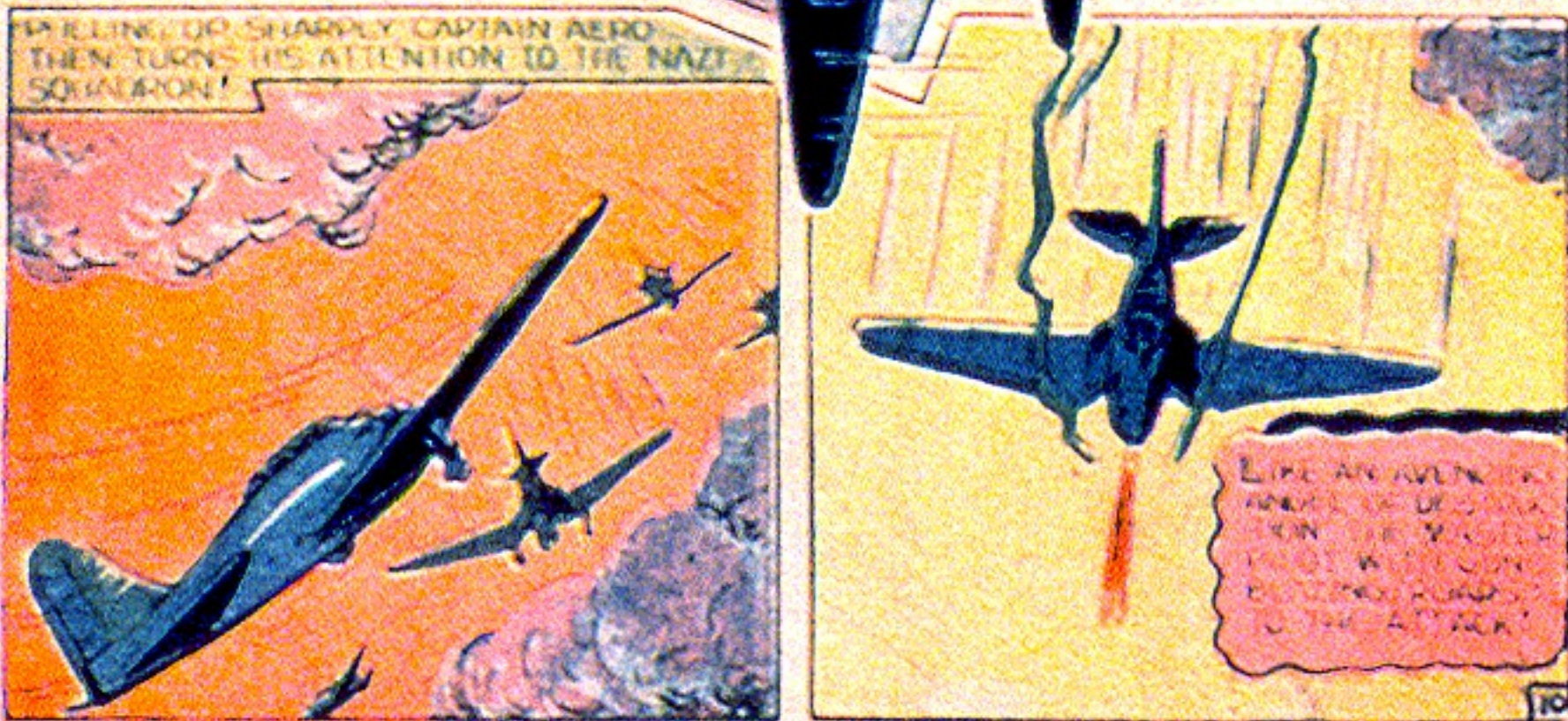
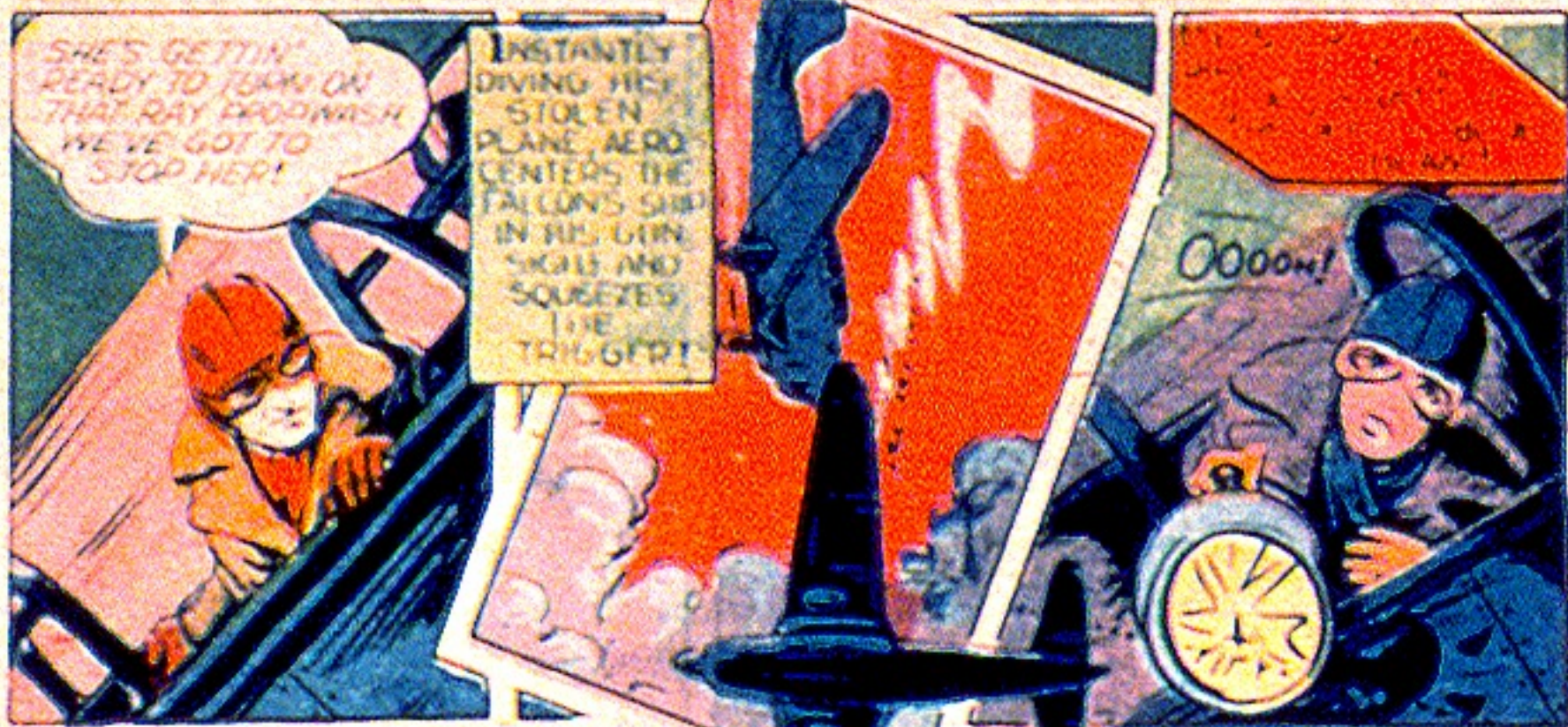
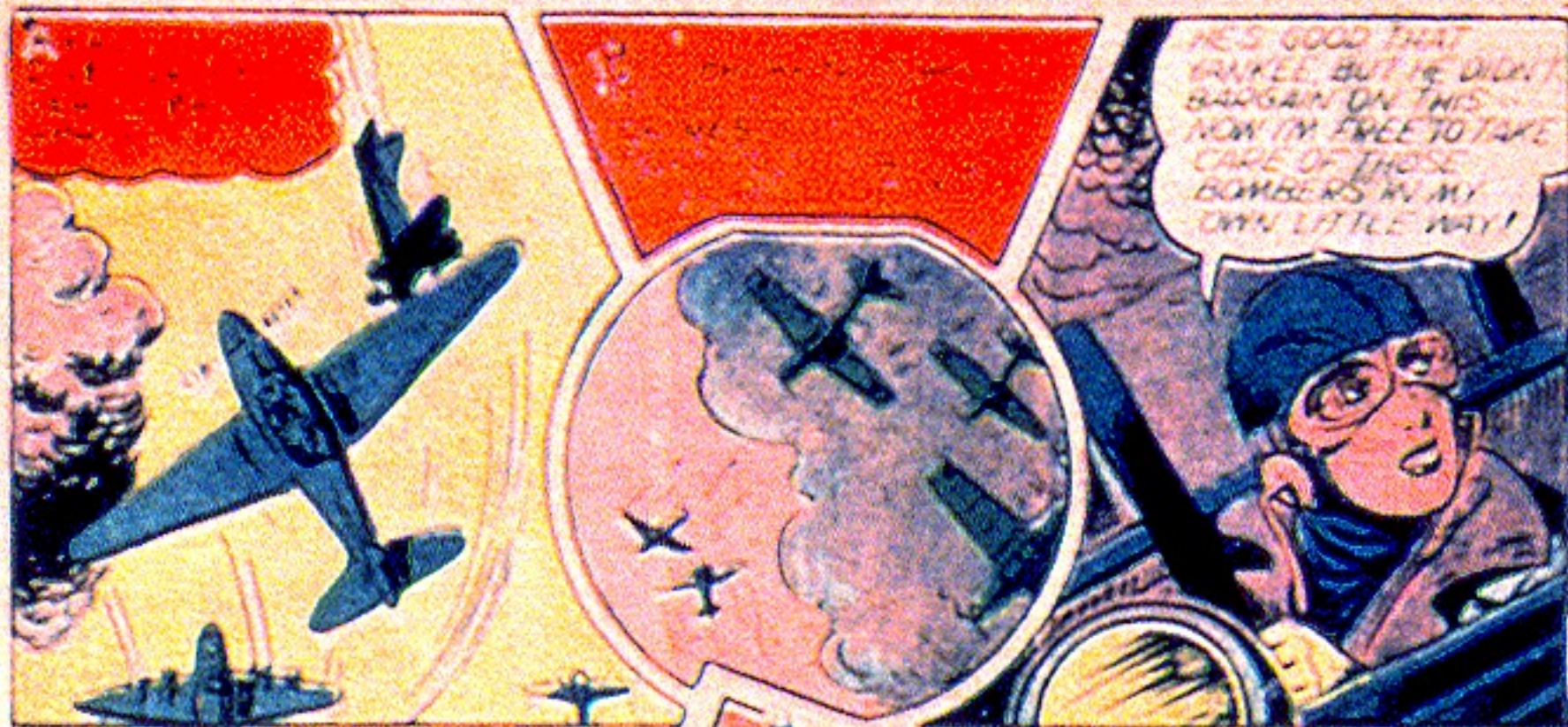
AN INSTANT LATER, ANOTHER PLANE BREAKS THROUGH THE CLOUDS BEHIND IT!

THERE SHE GOES!
SHE'S DIVING
SMACK AT OUR
BOMBERS!



QUICKLY, CAPTAIN AERO HURTTLES DOWN IN FRONT OF THE BLUE FALCON'S PLANE!







A...
FRAY...
THE...
A...



KEEP HER HUMMING
PROPT! THE BOMBERS
ARE LAMIN!



USING EVERY POSSIBLE TRICK
THE NAZI PILOTS STRIVE DESPER-
ATELY TO DOWN THE DARTING
AND DODGING AERO!



SHOOT HIM DOWN, YOU
FOOLS! HE'S ONLY
ONE AGAINST MANY!
UMM, BUT WHAT A ONE!



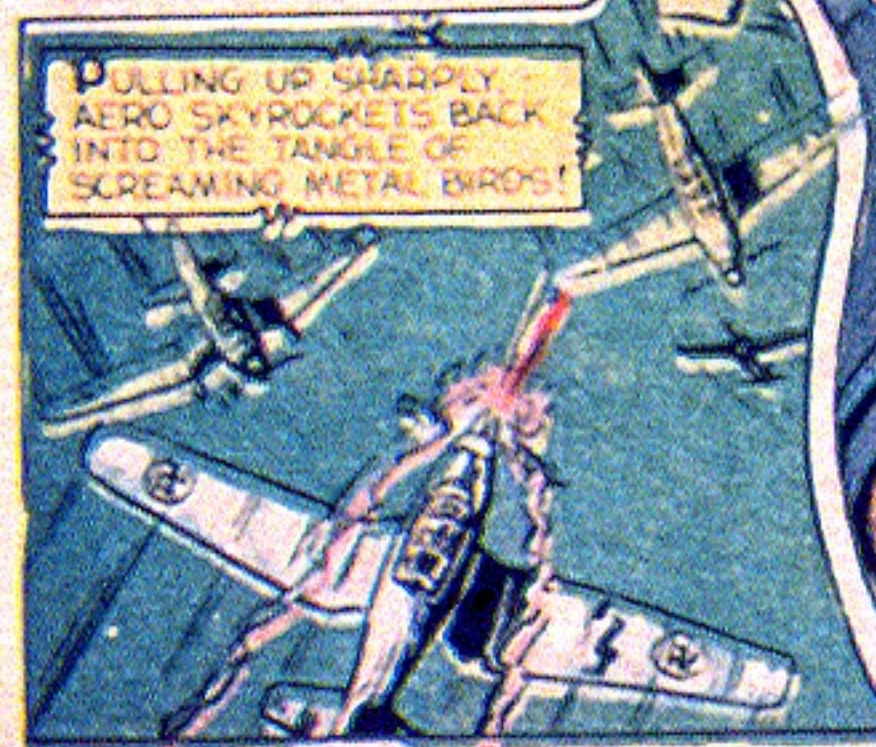
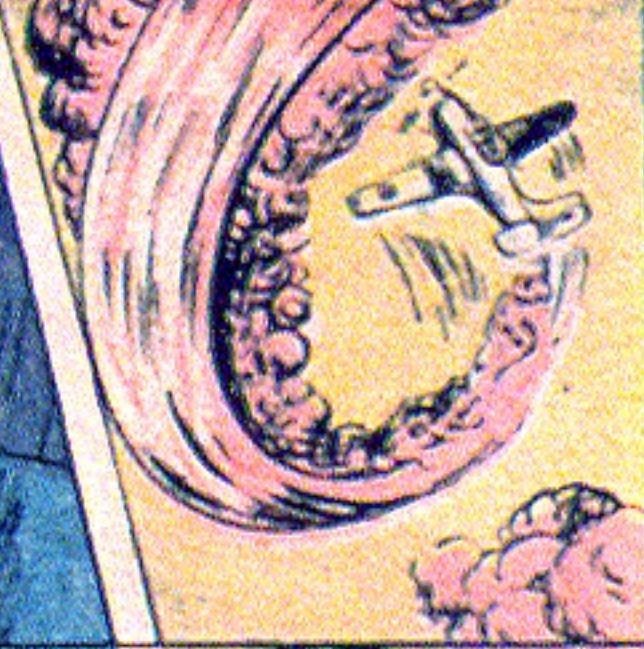
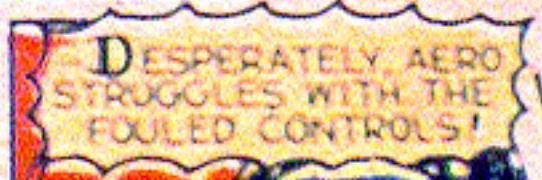
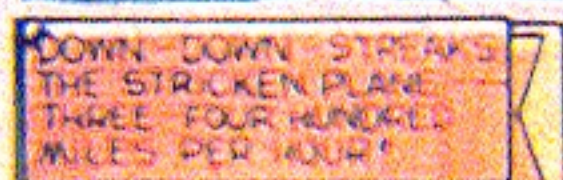
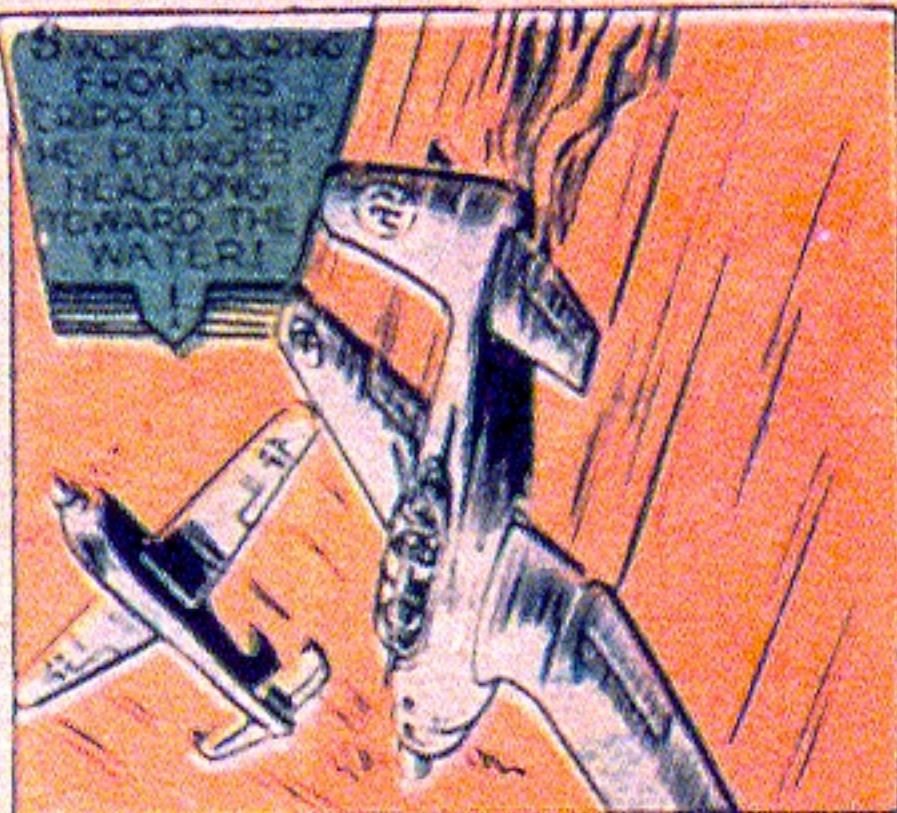
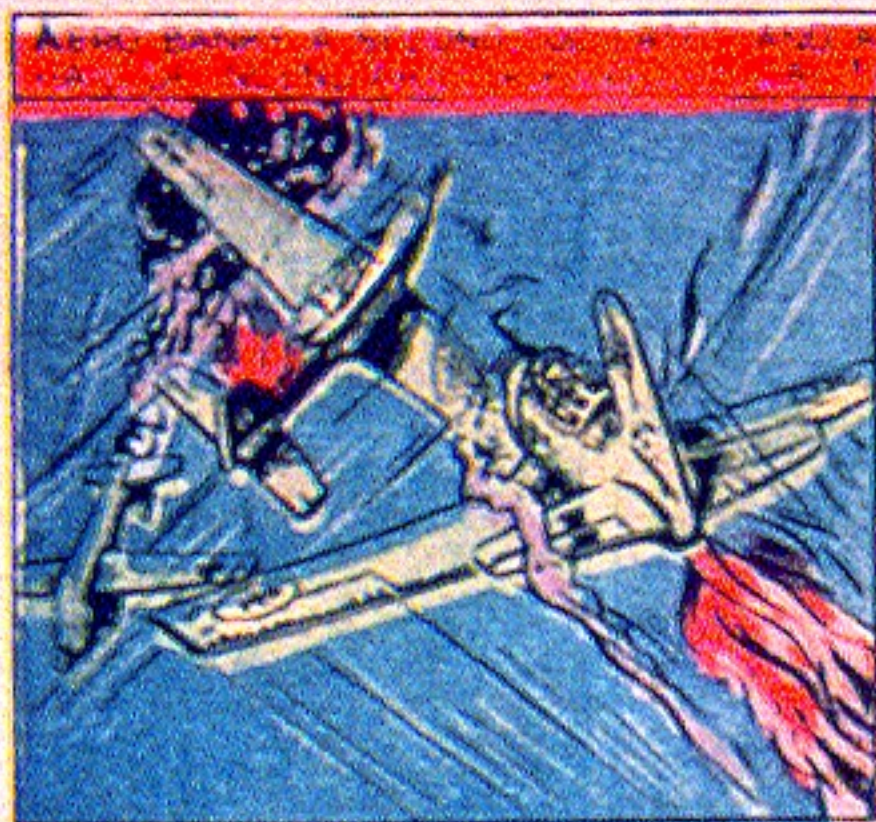
BOTTLE HIM UP
QUICK! HE'S
GETTING AWAY!



OH! OH! THEY'RE
GANGING UP-- STEADY
PROPWASH-- HERE
COMES THE GRAND
FINALE!



NOW YANKEE--
WE SHALL SEE
WHO RULES
THE SKIES!





THE NAU PILLS ARE TAKEN BY SURPRISE AS AER, LIKE A FLAMING METEOR, SWEEPS AMONG THEM!



PUTTING EVERY DUNCE OF HIS AMAZING SKILL INTO THE ATTACK, PLANE AFTER PLANE DOWNLANDS TO HIS WITHERING FIRE, TIL BUT ONE REMAINS...



AND THAT ONE IS THE SHIP OF -- THE BLUE FALCON!

WHAT A FLIER! HE BEAT THEM WITH A CRIPPLED SHIP! THE MAN IS SUPREME -- OH OH, HE'S COMING AFTER ME NOW! SORRY CAPTAIN, BUT IF I GO CAPTAIN YOU GO WITH ME -- AUF WEIDERSEN!



AS AERO DIVES INTO POSITION ON THE TAIL OF THE ENEMY, HE RECOGNIZES THE PILOT!

GOOD LORD! IT'S HER! I CAN'T SHOOT A WOMAN -- I CAN'T -- I'LL FORCE HER DOWN!

NOW!



AT THE MOMENT OF INDECISION THE FALCON ACTS -- A SUDDEN SIDE SLIP AND...

CRASH!



LOADED TOGETHER IN AN EMBRACE OF DEATH -- THE TWO SHIPS HURTLE DOWN TO A WATERY GRAVE IN THE INKY SEA BELOW



PROFWASH! PROFWASH! HERE I AM CAP! I'M OK, I'M ON A PIECE OF WRECKAGE

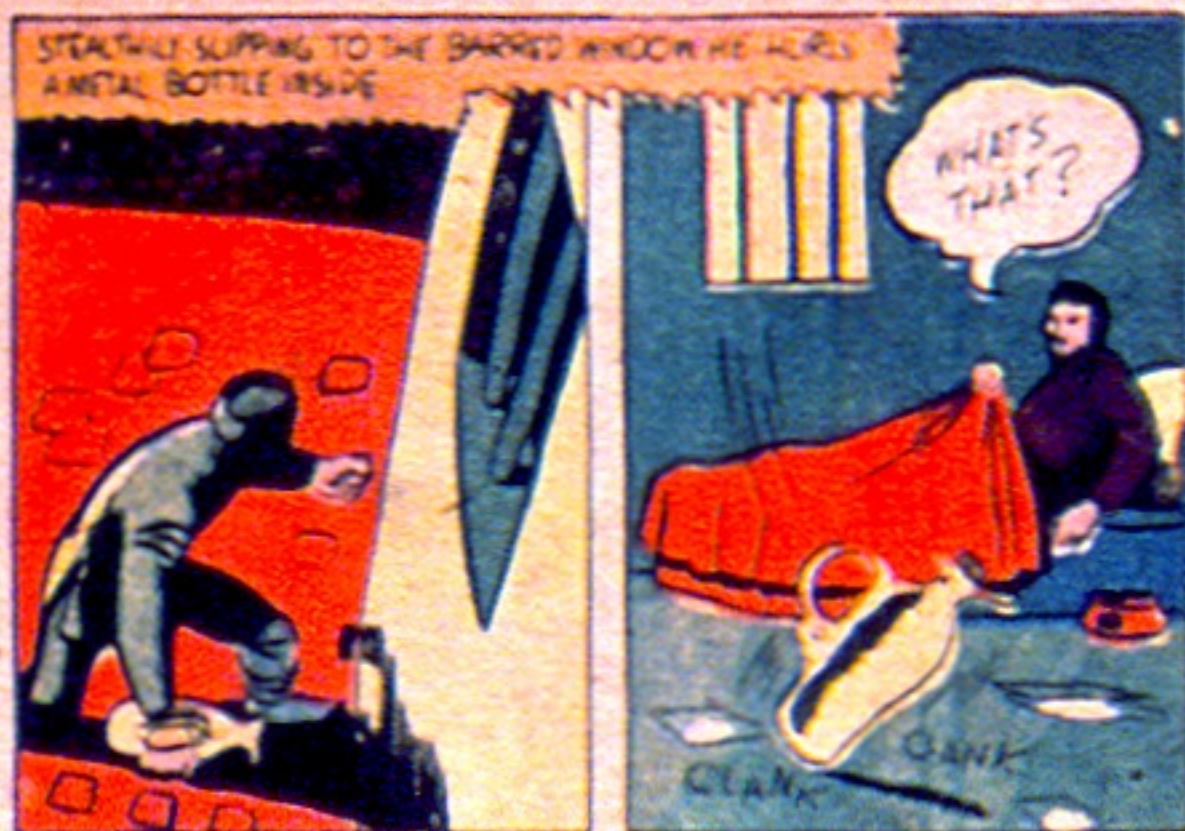
THANK HEAVEN! POOR KID, SHE DELIBERATELY CRASHED US. WELL THAT ENDS THE BLUE FALCON

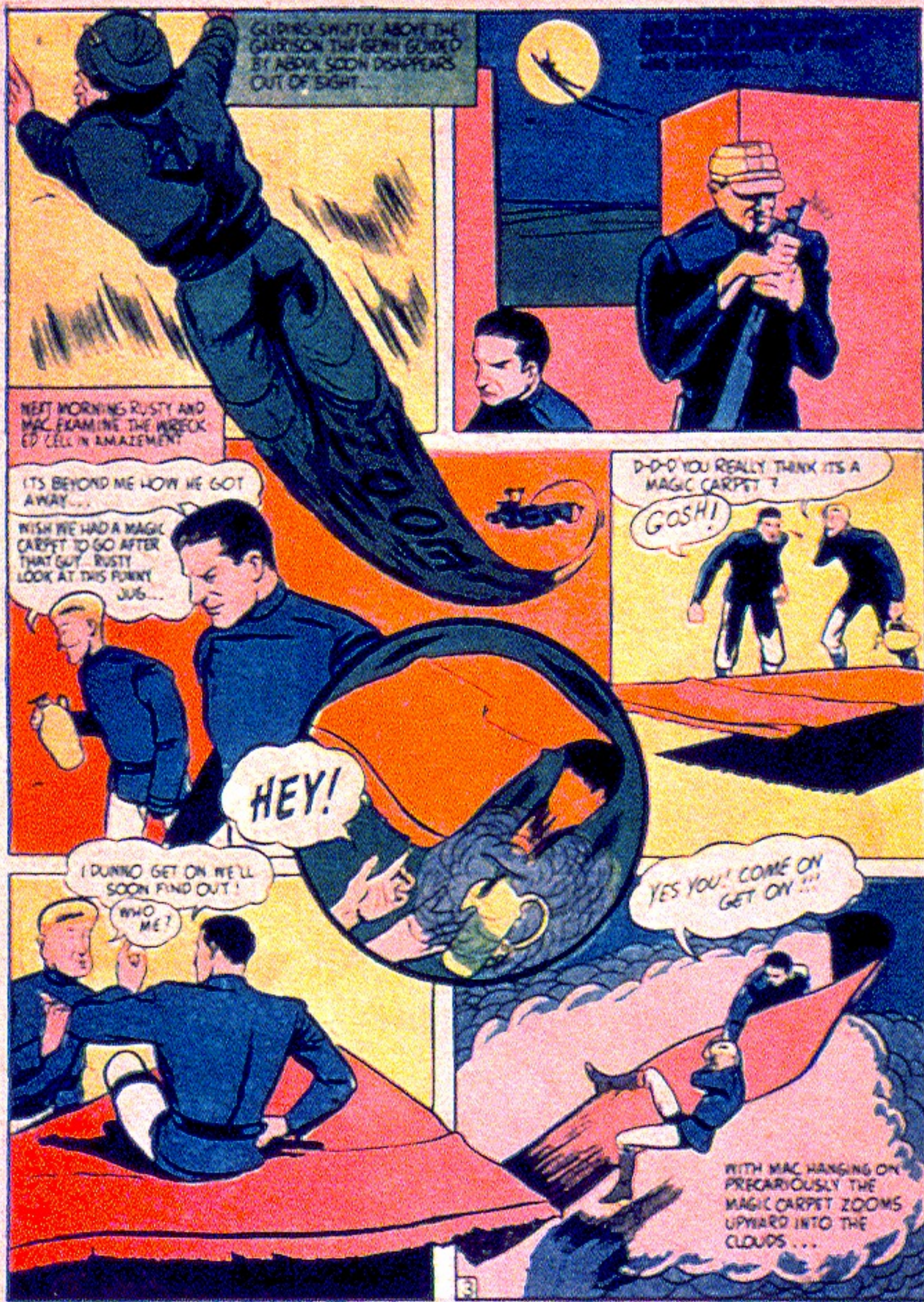


BUT WHAT IS THAT DARK SPOT BOBBING ALONG TOWARD THE ISLAND

CAN IT BE THAT THE BLUE FALCON TOO ESCAPED THE CRASH -- DON'T MISS THE NEXT GREAT CAPTAIN AERO COMICS







GLIDING SWIFTLY ABOVE THE GARRISON THE GEM GUIDED BY ABRAHAM SOON DISAPPEARS OUT OF SIGHT...

THE GEM GUIDED BY ABRAHAM SOON DISAPPEARS OUT OF SIGHT...

NEXT MORNING RUSTY AND MAC EXAMINE THE WRECKED CELL IN AMAZEMENT

IT'S BEYOND ME HOW HE GOT AWAY...

WISH WE HAD A MAGIC CARPET TO GO AFTER THAT GUY... RUSTY LOOK AT THIS FUNNY JUG...

HEY!

I DUNNO GET ON WE'LL SOON FIND OUT!

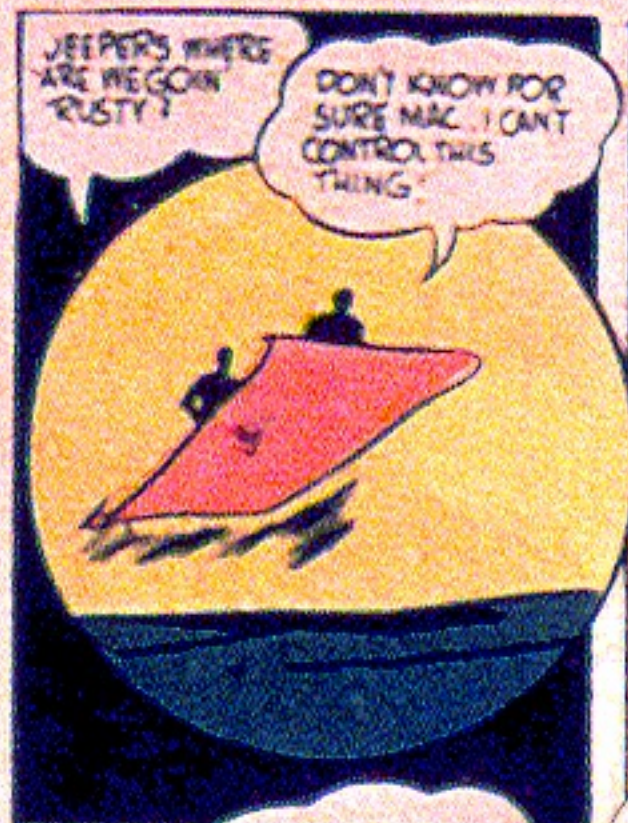
WHO ME?

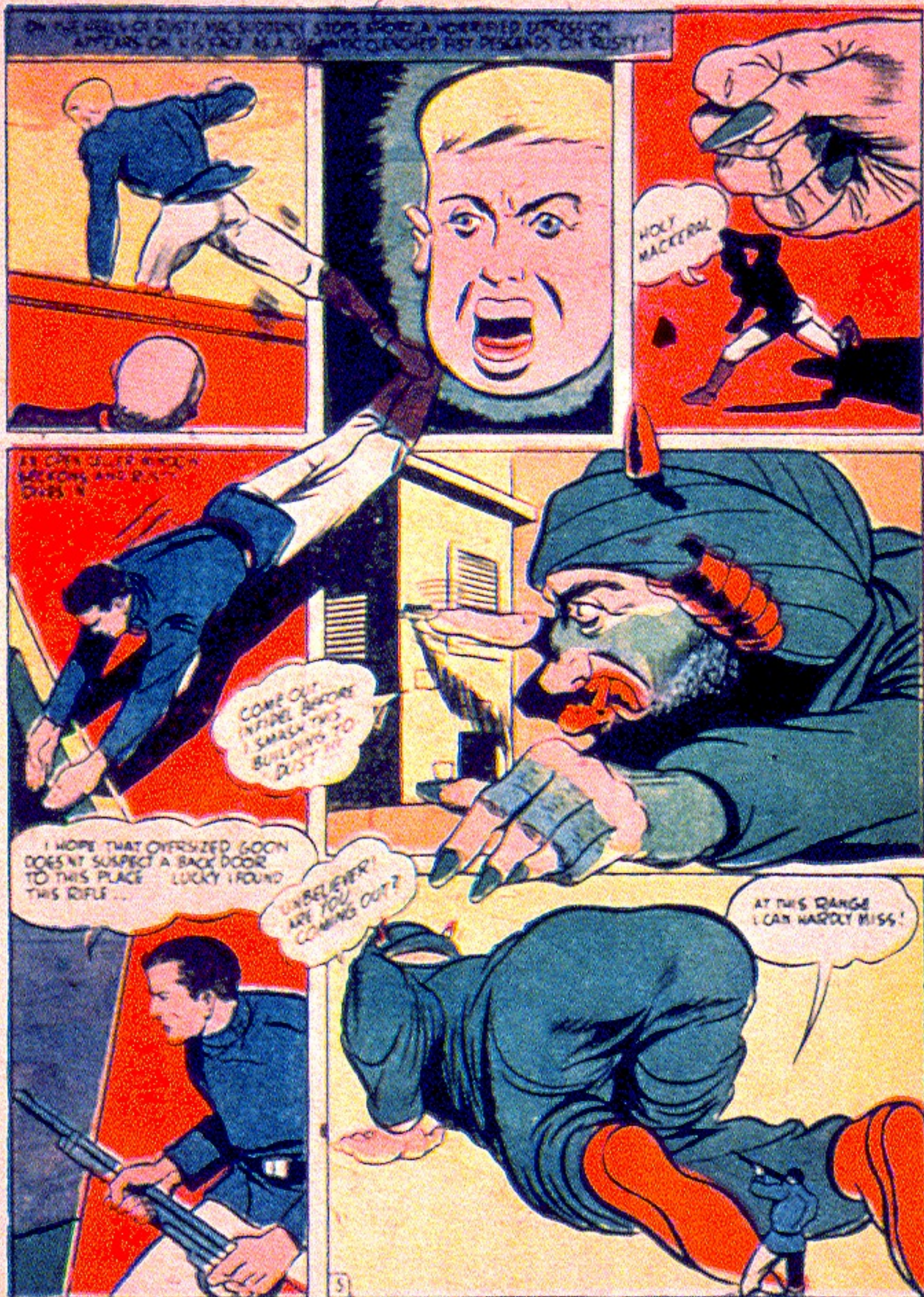
D-D-D YOU REALLY THINK IT'S A MAGIC CARPET?

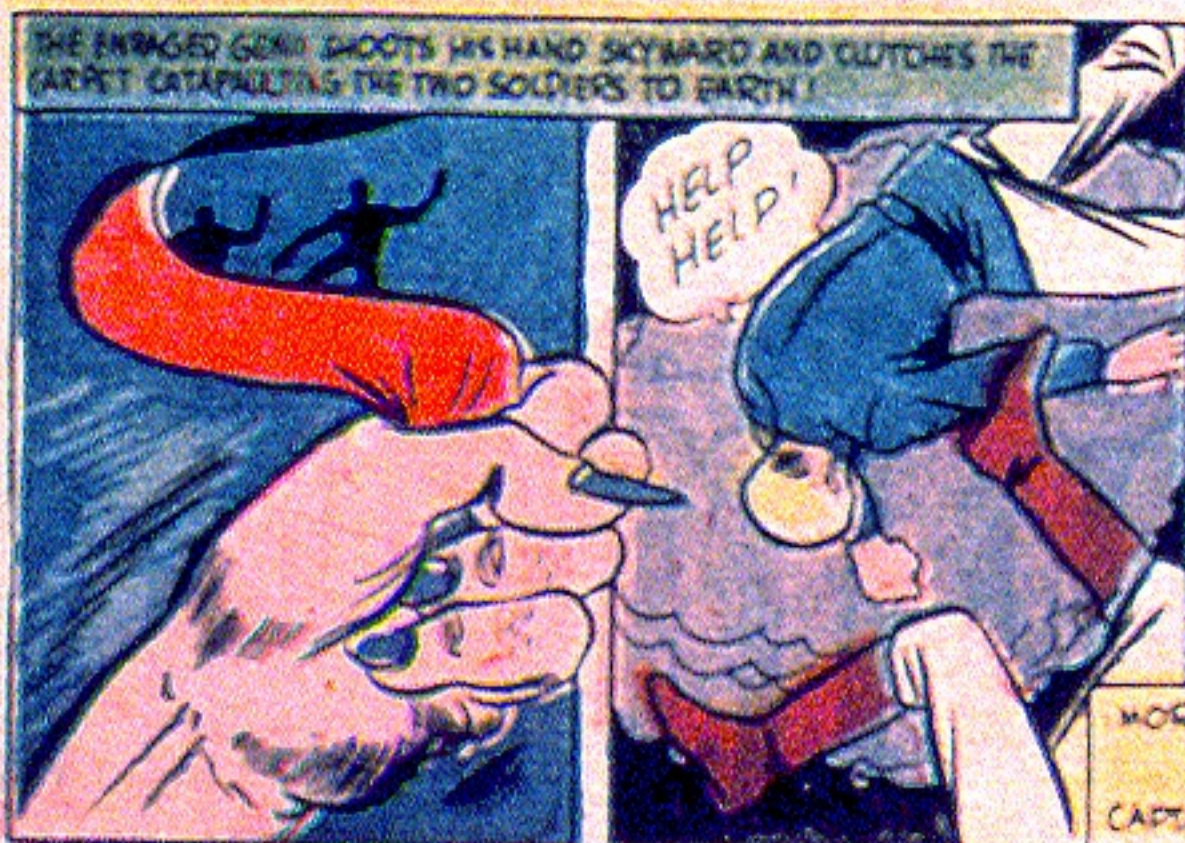
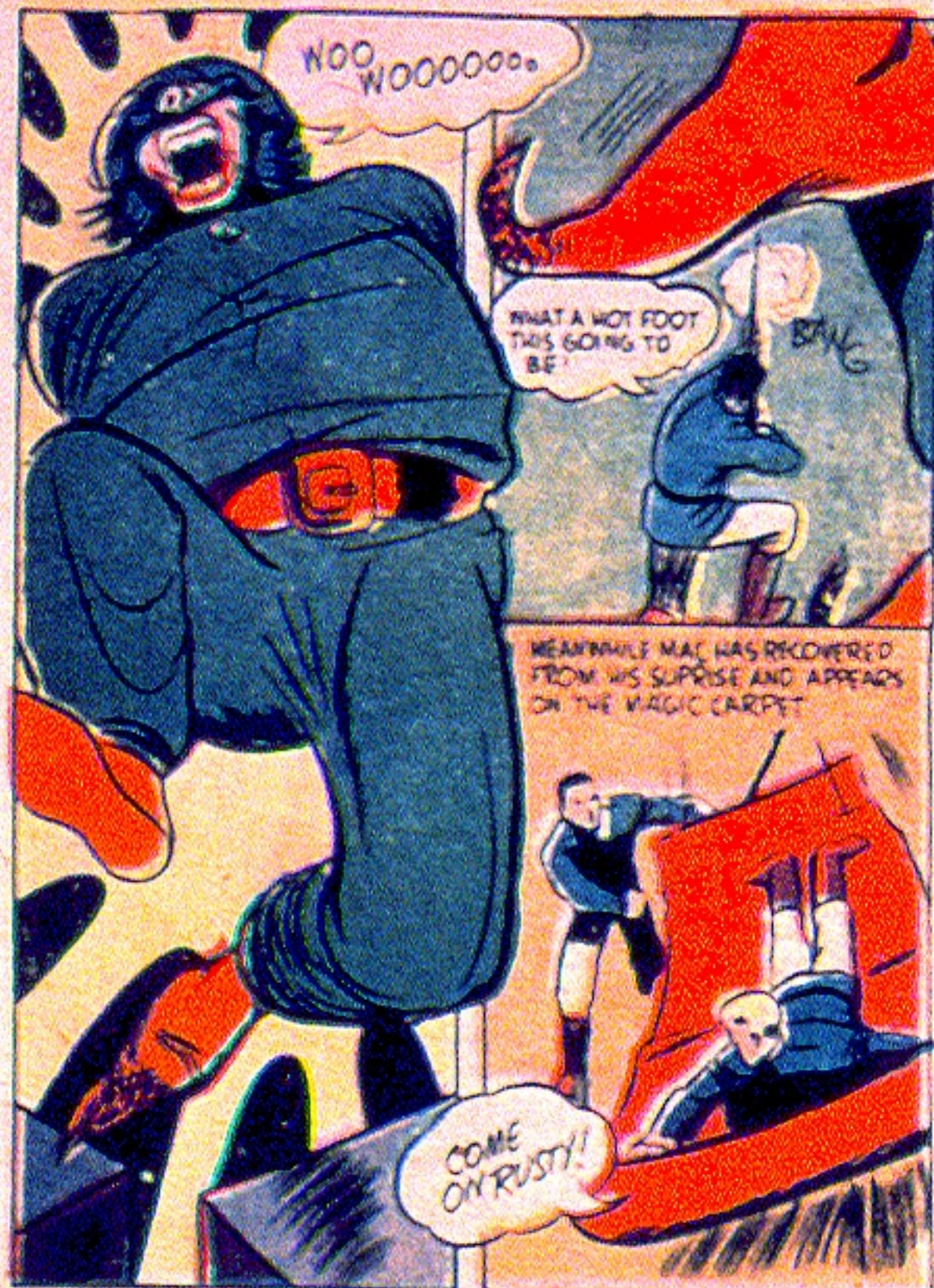
GOSH!

YES YOU! COME ON GET ON...

WITH MAC HANGING ON PRECARIOUSLY THE MAGIC CARPET ZOOMS UPWARD INTO THE CLOUDS...







MORE ADVENTURES OF RUSTY DUGAN
IN NEXT MONTH'S
CAPTAIN AERO COMICS

WHENEVER THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE ARE THREATENED BY THE IRON HANDS OF OPPRESSION--A CHAMPION WILL RISE TO THE DEFENSE OF THE WEAK--SUCH IS MAJOR HORNET (THE FLAGMAN)--SWORN TO PROTECT THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE!



THE FLAGMAN

NEW YORK HARBOR--THE LINER 'BLUE STAR' IS TOWED MAJESTICALLY INTO HER BERTH!



SUDDENLY--WITHOUT WARNING, THERE IS A TERRIFIC EXPLOSION, AND THE HUGE LINER SEEMS TO LEAP INTO THE AIR!



A FEW MINUTES LATER, IT DISAPPEARS BELOW THE SURFACE...



LIKE A GIGANTIC CRIPPLED SEA MONSTER, IT SETTLES ON THE BED OF THE RIVER...



THEN LIKE CREATURES OUT OF A STORY BOOK, STRANGELY GARBED MEN MAKE THEIR WAY QUICKLY TO THE SUNKEN LINER



ALLRIGHT MEN, GET INSIDE, WE'VE GOT TO WORK FAST!



FOR NEARLY AN HOUR, THE UNDERSEA BANDITS PLUNDER THE VALUABLE CARGO!



EXTRA! EXTRA!
ANOTHER LINER
BLOWN UP IN RIVER

- LEDGER -
POLICE BAFFLED!!
POLICE ARE UNABLE TO EXPLAIN
THE CAUSE OF THE SINKING OF TWO
STEAM SHIPS IN WEST RIVER ---
DIVERS REPORT THAT ALL CARGO
IS MISSING FROM SUNKEN SHIPS!

MAJOR HORNET, I'M SENDING YOU TO NEW YORK- FIND OUT ALL YOU CAN ABOUT THE SINKING OF THESE SHIPS!

I'LL LEAVE AT ONCE, SIR--AND DO MY BEST!

WELL, RUSTY, WE'RE OFF ON ANOTHER JOB FOR THE PRESIDENT--AND BY THE LOOKS OF THINGS, IT'S GOING TO BE PLENTY TOUGH!

OH BOY, LET'S GET GOING! I CAN'T WAIT!

THE FOLLOWING DAY:

STROLLING ALONG THE NEW YORK WATER FRONT, MAJOR HORNET AND RUSTY WATCH AS THE FREIGHTER "CUBA" STEAMS UP THE RIVER!

THERE SHE IS, RUSTY, AND CARRYING A HALF MILLION DOLLAR CARGO!

EVERYTHING SEEMS OKAY SO FAR!



SUDDENLY...THE SHIP LURCHES TO ONE SIDE--AN EAR SPLITTING EXPLOSION FOLLOWS, TEARING A MASSIVE HOLE IN THE STEEL HULL!

HOLY SMOKES!

C'MON, THAT'S OUR CUE! IT'S TIME FOR US TO GET BUSY!



AS THE FLAG-MAN STREAKS DOWN THE WHARF--HE CRASHES HEADLONG INTO A RUNNING FIGURE!

HURRY, RUSTY, IT'S SINKING FAST!





SUDDENLY,
THE FLOOR
BENEATH THE
TWO CRIME
FIGHTERS
OPENS!



...AND DOWN
THEY PLUNGE
INTO A DEEP
SHARK INFESTED
WATERY PIT!



MEANWHILE...IN ANOTHER PART OF
THE UNDERGROUND PASSAGE!

LOOK BOSS, THE WARNING
LIGHT--SOMEONE IS IN
THE TUNNEL!

IT'S FLAG-MAN! HE
FOLLOWED ME HERE
QUICK! WE MUST
DISPOSE OF HIM
IMMEDIATELY!



IN THE PIT, FLAG-
MAN STRUGGLES
DESPERATELY
WITH MAN-EATING
SHARKS!



...HIS LUNGS NEAR
BURSTING POINT, HE
SHOOTS UP TO THE
SURFACE!



WHUEW! GOSH! I
WAS AFRAID YOU
WOULDN'T MAKE IT!

TOO BAD,
OLD BOY!



THAT WAS
TOO CLOSE FOR
COMFORT!

YES, FLAG-MAN,
TOO BAD THEY
DIDN'T FINISH
YOU!





IN THE CONFUSION, FLAG-MAN QUICKLY RELEASES RUSTY!



ARE YOU OKAY, KID?

SURE, LET'S TEAR INTO THOSE MUGS!

NOW RATS, WE'LL DO A LITTLE TALKING, MY WAY!



HY CHUMS, GOING SOMEPLACE!



LIKE TWIN TORNADOES FLAG-MAN AND RUSTY SMASH INTO THE MOB!

WAHOO



AS THE MINE EXPLODES, THE ENTIRE UNDER RIVER HIDEOUT IS BLOWN SKY HIGH!



A FEW SECONDS LATER, TWO FIGURES CLING WEARILY TO A PIECE OF WRECKAGE...



TRY TO MAKE IT IN TO SHORE, RUSTY!

HOW ARE YOU, RUSTY?



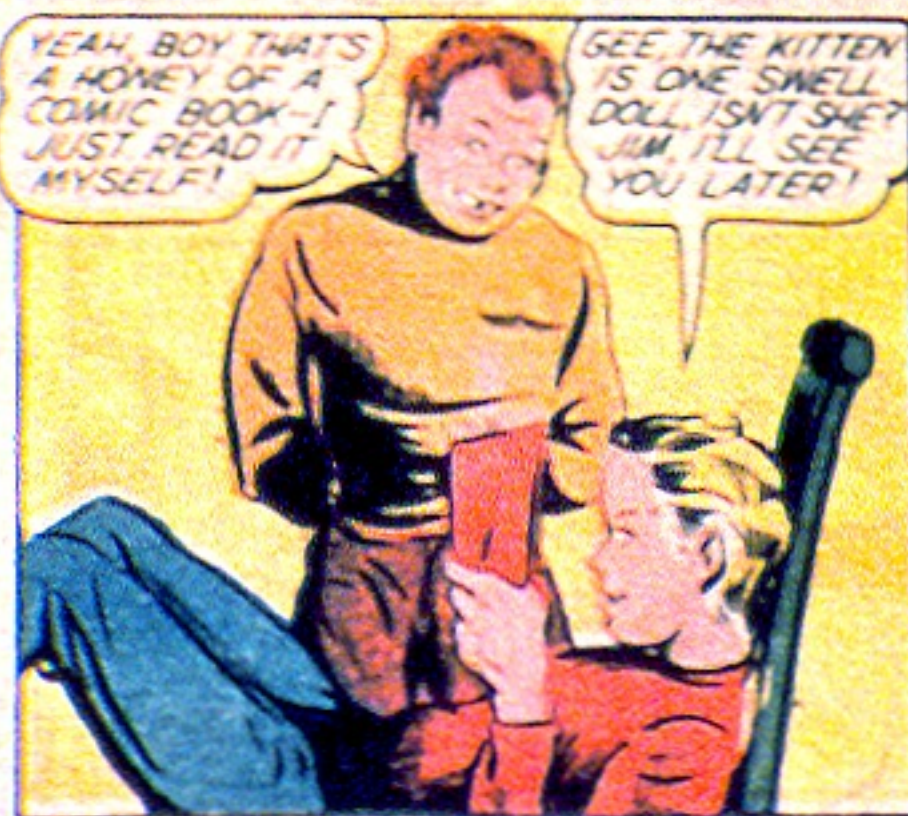
O-O-KAY, FLAG-MAN, JUST A BIT SHAKEN UP!

I FEEL BETTER NOW--WHEW, I NEVER EXPECTED TO COME THROUGH THAT ALIVE!



RUSTY TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, THERE'S TWO OF US WHO THOUGHT EXACTLY THE SAME THING!

FOLLOW THE AMAZING AND EXCITING ADVENTURES OF The "FLAGMAN" and RUSTY in EVERY ISSUE OF THE GREAT Captain **AERO** COMICS



LATER:

IN THE TOWN DARK, THE SKY SCOUTS SEND THEIR GASOLINE MOTORED PLANES SOARING IN THE AIR!



HANS, WHY HAVE YOU STOPPED THE CAR?

WE ARE ABOUT TO CONDUCT AN EXPERIMENT WITH OUR PROCESSED RUBBER PILLS!



YOUR PLANE FLIES VERY HIGH EH BOY?

SURE, MISTER! SOMEDAY I HOPE TO FLY A REAL SHIP-- I BELONG TO THE SKY SCOUTS!



GOOD! HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE YOUR PLANE FLY TWICE AS HIGH? JUST PUT THIS INTO THE GAS TANK!

THANKS, MISTER!



WE HANDS BOBBY A TINY BLACK PELLET...

THE STRANGERS DRIVE AWAY AND PARK BEHIND A CLUMP OF BUSHES TO WATCH!



NOW...

BOBBY SENDS HIS PLANE UP AGAIN--

AW, IT ISN'T GOING ANY HIGHER THAN IT USUALLY DOES!

THAT MUG MUST HAVE BEEN KIDDING ME-- HE DID LOOK KIND OF FISHY!



SUDDENLY... THE MODEL PLANE EXPLODES!

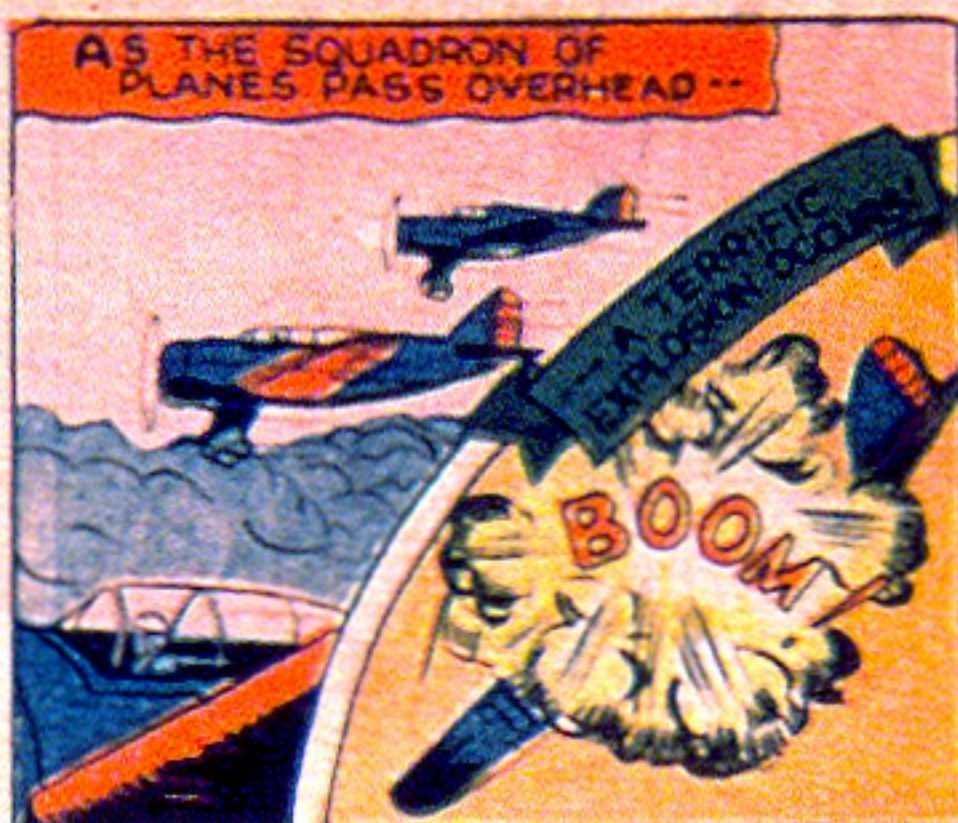


GEE!-- TOO BAD BOBBY!

IF I EVER SEE THAT GUY AGAIN, I'LL--



THE NEXT DAY BOBBY AND JIM ARE AT THE AIRPORT WATCHING ARMY PLANES TAKE OFF ON ROUTINE FLIGHTS!





AS THE DRIVER OF THE ROADSTER ENTERS THE FARMHOUSE THE SCOUTS SCAMPER OUT OF THE TRUNK



STAY OUT HERE-I'M GONNA PAY A SOCIAL CALL!

HELLO-REMEMBER ME? MAY I COME IN?



WHY-ER-SURE, SONNY!



I'D LIKE TO GET A NEW SUPPLY OF THOSE LITTLE RUBBER BALLS. THEY'RE GREAT TO PUT INTO ARMY PLANES. DON'T YOU THINK?



YOU'RE A SMART BOY-BUT A LITTLE TOO SMART!

WELL, IF IT ISN'T SPINACH FACE AGAIN--MAY I LEAVE MY CALLING CARD!



HERE IT IS!

BOP!



AN I'VE GOT AN EXTRA ONE FOR YOU TOO!

OW!

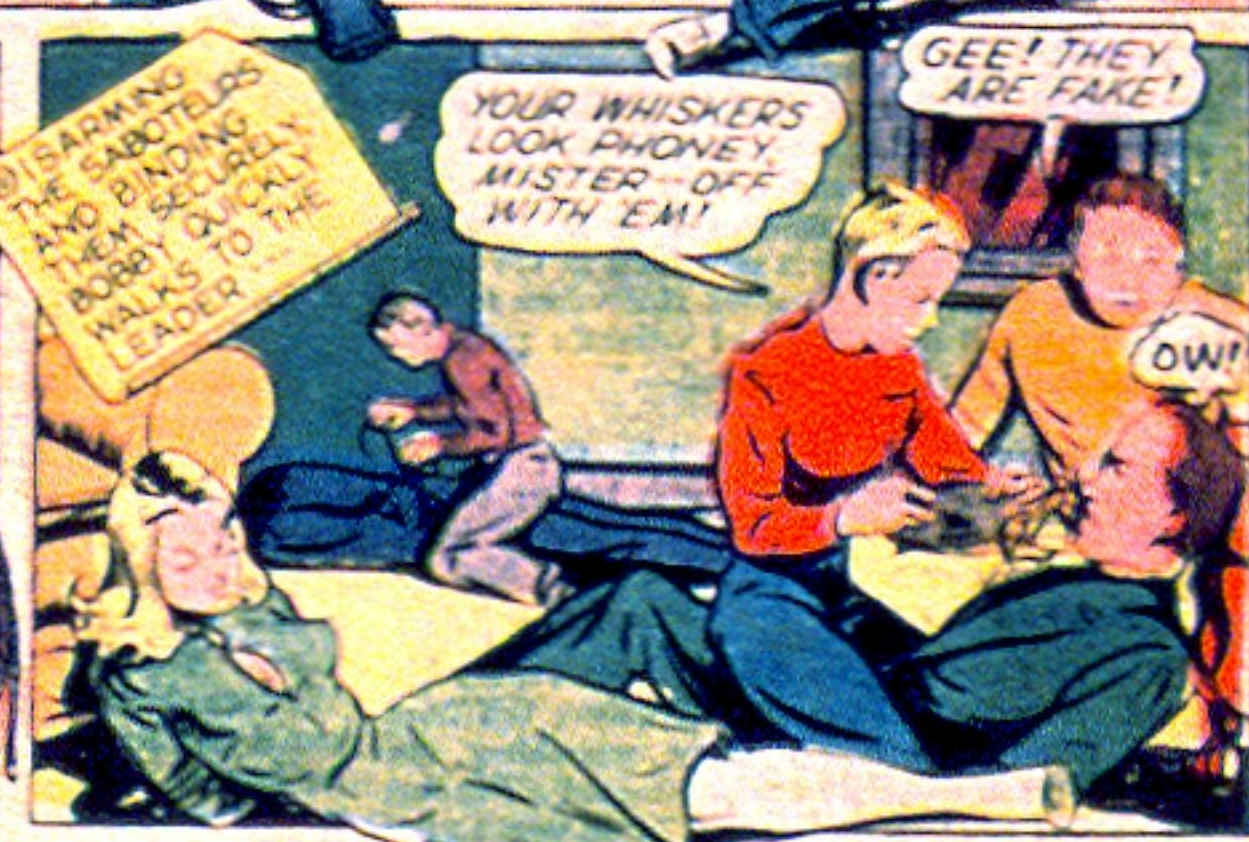


TOUGH GUY EH SONNY!-ALLRIGHT, SAY YOUR PRAYERS--YOU'RE GOING TO SLEEP!

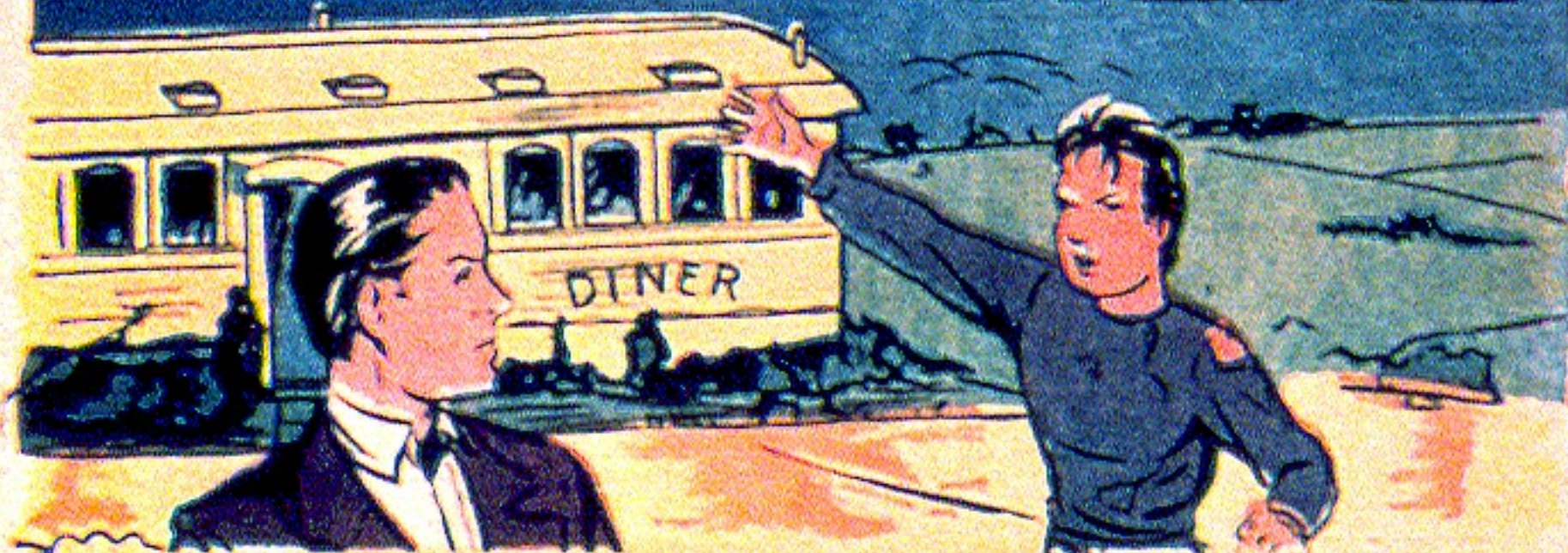
WATCHING AT AN OPEN WINDOW, BOBBY'S PALS REALIZE IT IS TIME FOR THEM TO ACT

I'LL BLITZ HER WITH MY SHIP--WATCH!





HEART AND HEAD



On the Illinois prairie, lunch wagons are frequented by strange characters; here mostly everyone has a plan for tomorrow. Tom Walker, was one such, and as he came through the door, he paused to scan the scene before him, looking from one face to the other he found them all strangers still when taking a seat he felt something of warmth; perhaps the waiters cry of "Ham and—"

Tom was going to meet life, the call of youth, the thirst for contact with bigger things than he had known in his struggle back there in the city which had hardened him for his place in the sun.

Hurrying away after downing his coffee, his mind on making Rock Island before the next feed, he was already busy searching the road for a lift, when he caught the call, "Pardon me could I ask you a question?" and was somewhat surprised on turning to find he had been followed by a timid comical looking chap almost too weary to stand, the picture of despair.

A good face always got under Tom's skin. He could read the unspoken appeal in the kid's eyes, the manner and the tone, of the voice appealed deeply to his sympathy—looking the kid over he concluded here is a perfect specimen of a mamma's boy, lost in the woods.

You kids who are privileged to draw up and chat three times a day to eat that stuff, "Mom" calls food, try two weeks out there where "Mom" ain't, then you'll know what it's all about. One foodless day with only a glass of water to dry a parched throat sure makes food seem mighty important and home mighty attractive.

Tom knew nothing of the nation-wide police alerts sent out of Boston by banker Franklin,

appealing for information with a description of his son, but five minutes chat told the boy's story. Two weeks from the fireside, broke and confused—a soft kid's venture into a hard world. Nothing but a few dollars and lots of advice couldn't smooth out and Tom gave him a double barrel charge.

Knowing all the signs he gave the kid more than advice, anyone is in better shape to take advice after a feed—here was plain hunger and they drifted back to the lunch wagon.

Walking and talking they had gone quite a few miles before getting that lift into Rock Island where they made straight for the Western Union for he was certain the kid could not handle life on his own and should be home. Western Union has handled many messages, but few have given more comfort than that dictated by Tom and signed by the kid telling his parents of his home coming.

Years later Tom Walker loved that kid again. In desperation he had taken a long shot on a difficult road construction job for which he was not properly equipped. Now several months over the completion date for the contract and with winter fast closing in, he was battling to beat a freeze-up and ruin. The kid on finishing college had passed into federal service, drawing the assignment as inspector on Walker's job—it was a moment of bitter reflection.

"You are running into clay, Tom and I'm not taking clay, I'll send back every load of it."

"Okay kid, no clay—I'll tell the shovel runner to move when he hits it. But get this in your head, we're in for a big freeze. If

I'm not done and gone before she hits we'll be snowed in for the winter and the bank gets my outfit next spring; so I'm telling you don't block this work kid, don't block it."

"Do it right is all I ask."

"What about the bridge, do I cross it?"

"The bridge is green Tom, and I'm taking no chances."

"But kid, I sweetened the mix for the bridge deck and it will hold twice its weight right now."

"Tom, I can't take the chance."

"Kid, if I have to haul around by the old road I'm baked, you don't want to break me, do you?"

"Of course not, but that bridge deck is far too green to take a chance putting the trucks over it."

"Now listen kid, don't be near that bridge when I get there, it might not be healthy for you; we're throwing that road in and nothing is stopping us."

Tom Walker turned without another word. This was no time for argument. The threat of the weather and the time clause in the contract forced action. He was seeing red as he was looking failure in the face, he would meet it as he had always met it—fighting—and he meant to fight.

Ten years had passed since Tom had given the kid a bucket for home, and that feed out on the Illinois prairie. Both were conscious of the moral claim this fact injected into the situation, but both men had their standards. Tom did not press the claim he chose to fight.

You need only hear the roar of trucks that came without pause throughout the night to dump their loads, to know that Tom had gone back to the pit to make a fight for it. The kid stood by to encourage and direct his race against time. You could sense his keen desire to be of service as he shouted again and again—"Speed her up boys, dump her here; back out there; pull to the right; swing this way; move rock there; thin it there; bank it in the middle; Casey, trot the old bulldogger straight up the left."

Shortly after midnight one of the truckmen shouted, "Looks like we'll make it if we can cross the bridge, how about it kid?"—to which he answered, "Sorry, old man, but I can't allow it."

Almost in the next minute he heard the dump man cry—"She's sticking, Bill," then the kid called, "Hold it, let me see what you've got in that load." Trucks were piling up and more were coming, but the kid held up the work with his cry, "Take it back, no clay was my order."

"Aw, kid we gotta finish this job."

"Take it back."

"We can't, the boss would go nuts."

For a second the kid hesitated, then, "Okay take the load up ahead."

"You're gonner let me dump it?"

"Yea off the fill."

"Kid, Kid! Holy cripes it'll be your funeral."

But the kid ordered the first load dumped off the fill near the bridge, then speaking to the driver, "Tell Tom to move the shovel; let him think I took those loads, but that I won't take any more."

"But kid, when he finds out he'll kill you."

"Get back to the pit, tell Tom the barometer is rising."

The news of rising barometer with its promise of holding the storm which threatened to make it impossible to complete the work, was received back at the rock pit with a cheer by the men who were bone weary from the strain of long hours for the past week in this fight against weather. It also served to soften the anger felt by Tom Walker. If the weather held over the night and he could persuade the kid to let the trucks use the bridge, they could make it even though they had lost an hour moving the shovel. Again was heard the roar of the Diesel and the screech of the friction drum as the bucket swung into action, the routine that must go on through the night.

Every man in the crew was now in his stride, trucks rolling and the shovel eating its way into the bank with the precision of men who felt this fight was also their fight. Tom Walker felt humbled by this show of devotion by men who seemed to do more work than they had ever done before.

The other trucks dumped their loads as the kid directed and he called to Casey, "Run the bulldogger over here; we are going to shove this pile into that hole and build a road down to that ledge running parallel with the bridge and on up to the highway on the other side so that we can get at the last fifty feet without traveling the 25 miles on the old turnpike to make it."

"But without light kid, the man doesn't live who can handle this baby in that cut. Not me. I might tackle it in daylight."

"Get down, get down! I'll handle it."

"Take her kid, but don't say I didn't call it crary."

"Move back there boys, let those trucks come up, throw those headlights over the span. I've got two hours of hard work in that cut and I don't want a word out of anyone of you."

As he gave her the gas, the bulldogger moved slowly forward shoving a huge quantity of clay and rock into the cut; then she suddenly nosed downward; but he caught her with the emergency; he threw her into reverse and backed on to the roadway. The heavy rain and sleet warned him and made him realize the importance of light. In the dark he might go off the brink, whilst too much speed might cause him to lose control, but the job must be done, and he bent to the task.

Each time he sent the bulldogger towards the edge he was playing with fate. One foot and eternity. A fool and a machine. Ugly night, ugly thoughts.

Each time he backed onto loose gravel he was defying it. Now he was ready to ease her down onto the ledge, something of a prayer escaped his lips; now he was down. Now for reverse, she was crawling, would she slip? No, no, she's making it; each lurch brought sweat that soaked him, he was covered with a sheet of ice as it quickly froze. The hazards he was facing blinded him to every sense, but the safety margins; there on the ledge inches counted.

"Kid, one slip and you are off that ledge for a three hundred foot drop."

"It's your job not to slip."

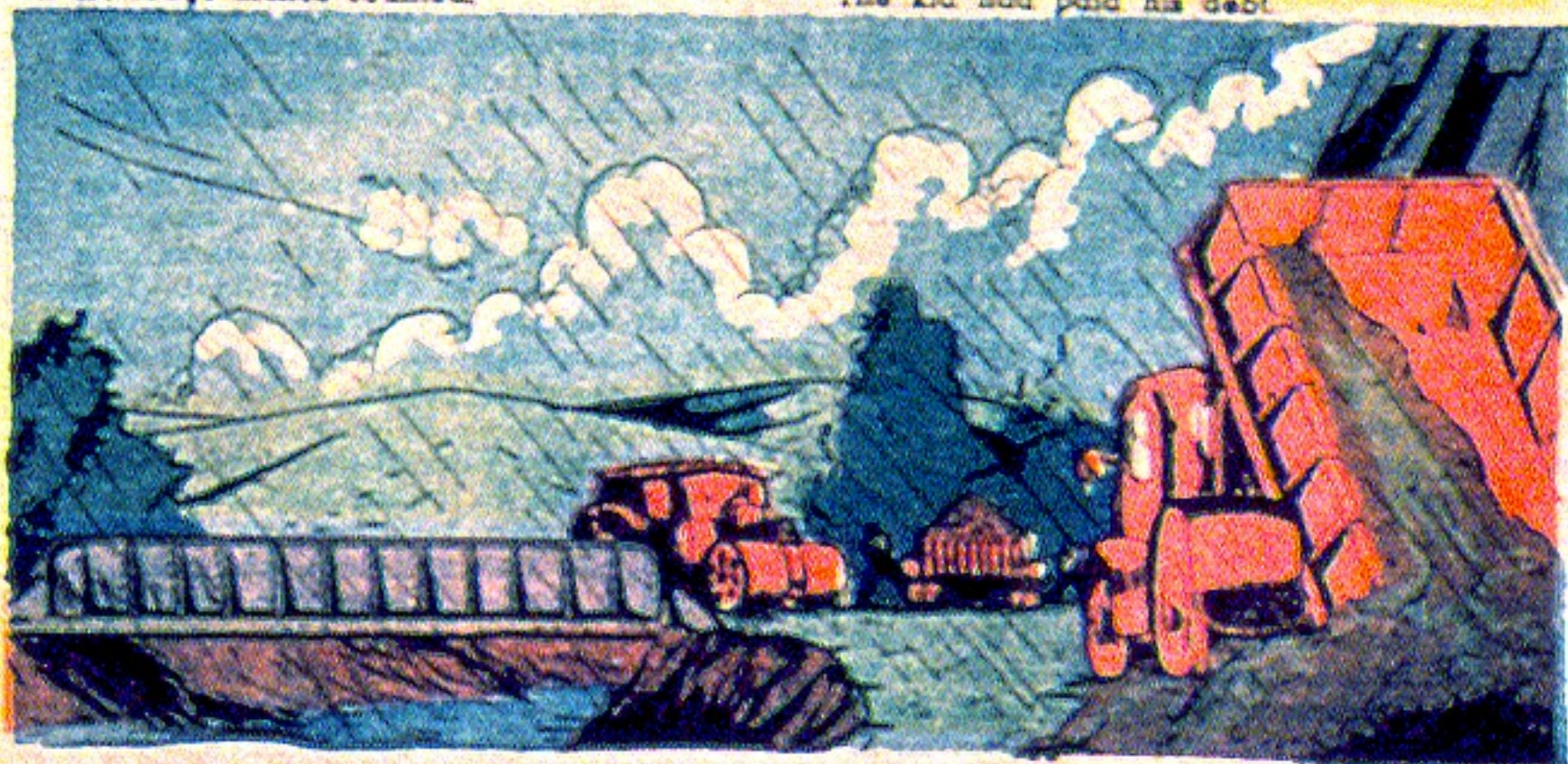
Down, back, forward, down, hold her, ease u, hundreds of times it seemed this routine, and each time his spirits rose but the strain was hitting him with needle-like darts through the body.

Just a few more trips and the ramp to the ledge would be finished. On and on went the bulldogger shoving rock and clay, spreading and packing as he held on to the controls, easing her to the brink, and back again for more.

"Yes, Carey had something when he warned me." "One more trip and the ramp is ready—now it will hold." "Shove rock into the dip—one trip should do it." "Now send her up, let her rip her path. We are making it, we are making it old girl! Come on baby, come on baby, we can't fail! spread it out, claw your way to the top." "Tear that boulder out of your way, steady baby, steady—there now you've done it."

Now he was driving her back and forth to pack her for the job of supporting the trucks with their load of rock. Just a few more runs and he would pass them. Then he came to a stop with a cry. "Well, boys, there she is, take her, shoot those trucks across," and slumped forward exhausted. Carey pulled himself up besides him and backed the bulldogger off the highway and round to the first load that came across sweeping it into the fill—satisfied now that they would make it, and soon again was heard the roar of trucks as they caught the tempo of the thing.

The kid had paid his debt.



ALIAS

- by -
ALICE
VINEY

LAA-DEES
AND GENTLEMEN!
PREE-SENTING THE
CIRCUS OF
DEATH!!

AS IF FROM OUT
OF NOWHERE COMES
THE MYSTERIOUS
CRIME FIGHTER X
TO SMASH THE
VICIOUS CRIMES
THAT ARE BEYOND
THE REACH OF
THE LAW!



AND FOR ONLY ONE DIME
YOU CAN SEE DANCE THAT
EXOTIC BEAUTY - THAT CHARMING
LADY OF THE SNAKES - SHE LIVES
EATS, AND SLEEPS WITH THE
DEADLY REPTILES - ONE DIME

IS ALL YOU
NEED SO
HURRY
HURRY
HURRY!





...AS THE LIGHTS DIM,
THE CURTAINS SLIDE
BACK OUT OF SIGHT
REVEALING TANGA,
"LADY OF THE
REPTILES"



FROM SOME
WHERE SOFT MUSIC
ENCHANTS THE GIANT
SNAKES AS THEY
SLOWLY COIL
AROUND THEIR
MASTER!



...SUDDENLY
THE ENTIRE SIDE
SHOW IS PLUNGED
INTO DARKNESS

THE LIGHTS
WENT OUT!

EEEEEEK!!

TURN ON THE
LIGHTS!

IN THE BLACKNESS A DEADLY REPTILE



...AND A FEW SECONDS LATER, FLAMES POUR
FROM THE SIDESHOW!



FIRE!



THE ENTIRE SHOW
IS SOON A RAGING
INFERNO—CIRCUS
HANDS WORK
DESPERATELY
TO CONTROL
THE FLAMES!

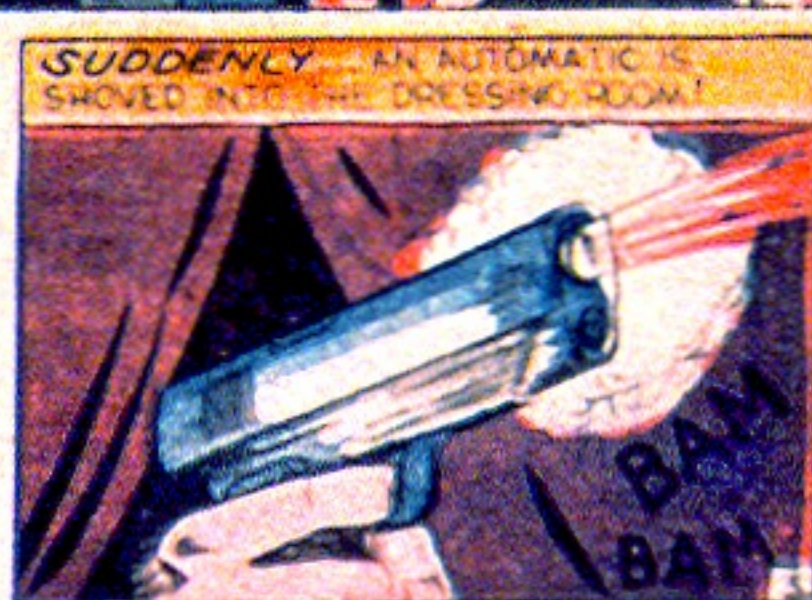


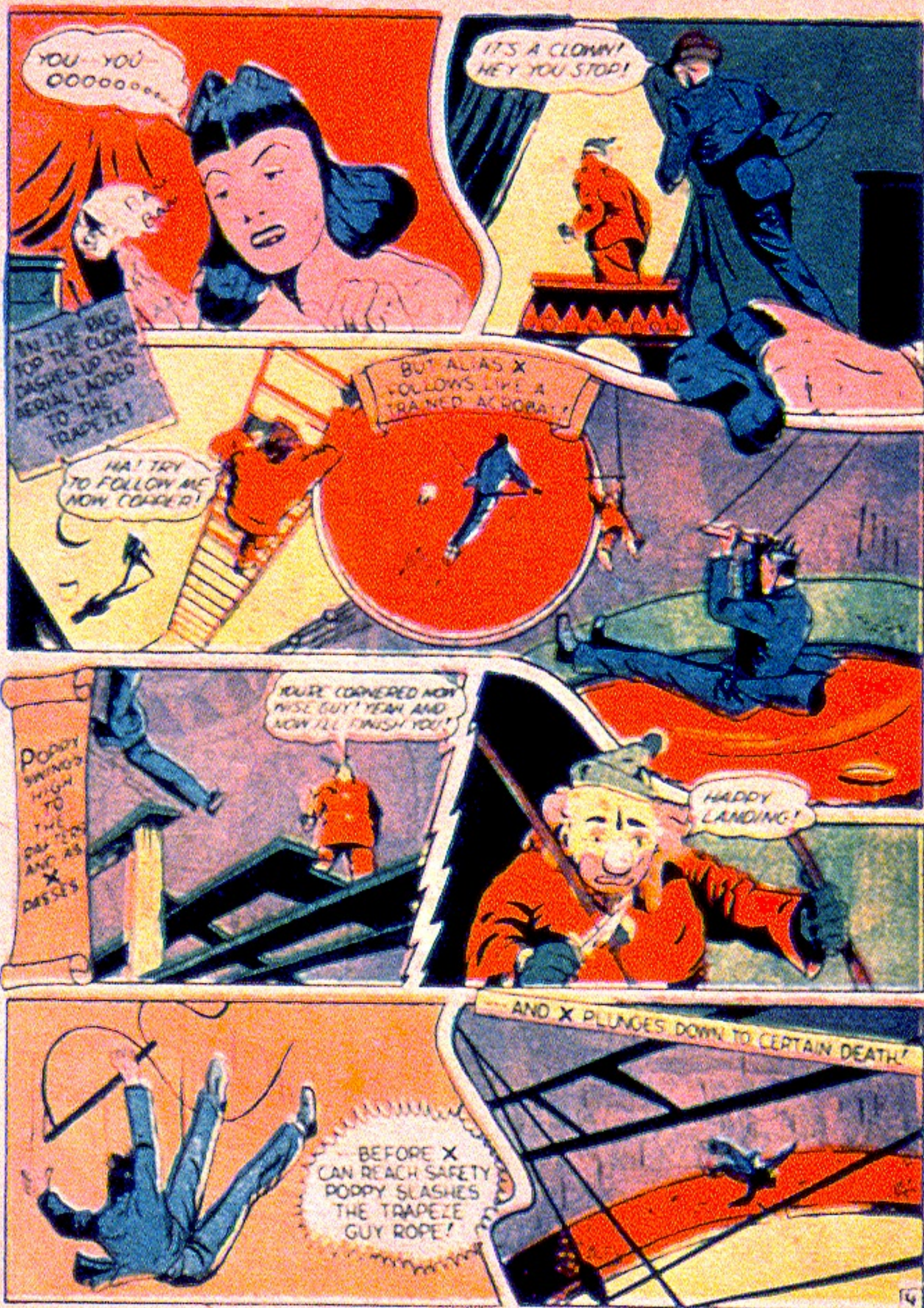


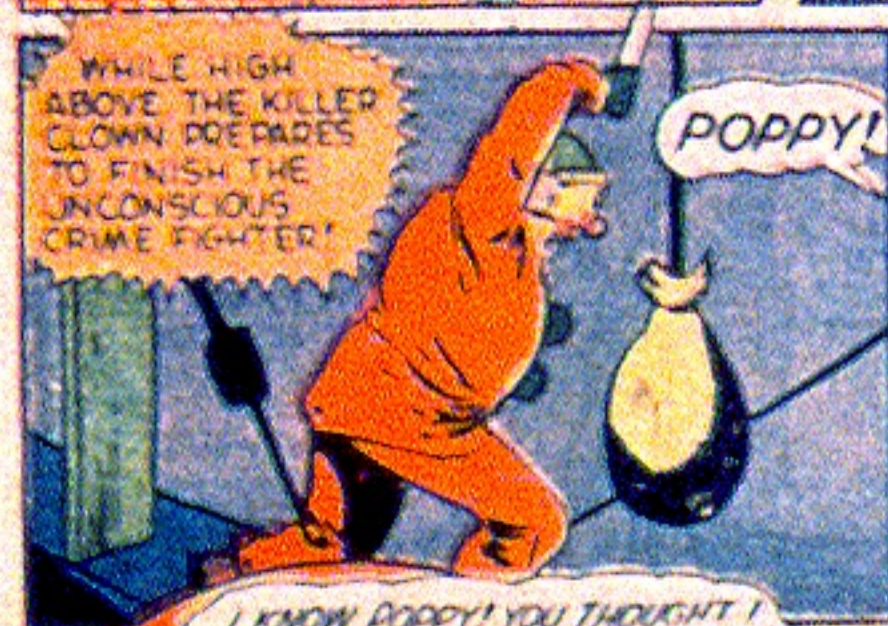
THE FOLLOWING DAY
EVERYONE WAS TALKING ABOUT THE
ACCIDENTAL DEATH
OF WESTWELL.

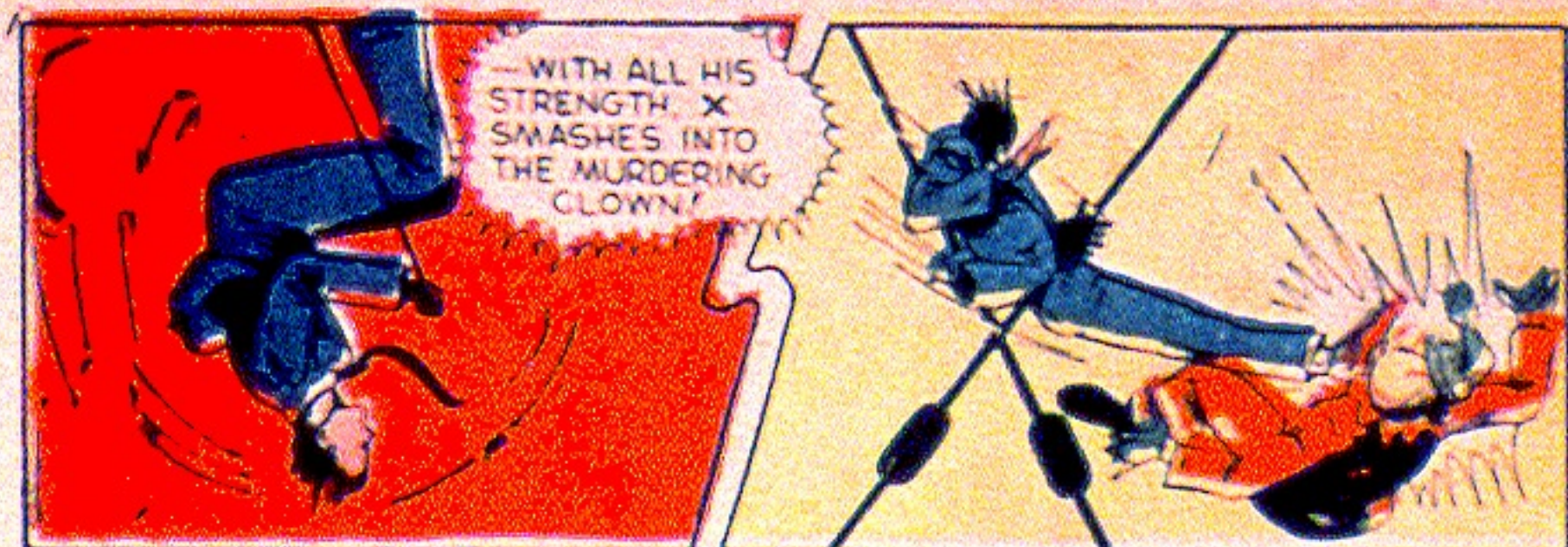


AS THE CLOCK
STRIKES TWELVE
ALIAS X
SLIPS SILENTLY
INTO TANGA'S
DRESSING-ROOM!











A GROUP OF FULL FLEDGED YOUNG AMERICANS RISK THEIR LIVES TO PROVE ALLEGIANCE TO THEIR COUNTRY ... THEY EMBARK ON A HAIR-RAISING ADVENTURE SMASHING A DEADLY PLOT THAT ENDANGERS THE FREEDOM AND LIFE OF THE AMERICAS....

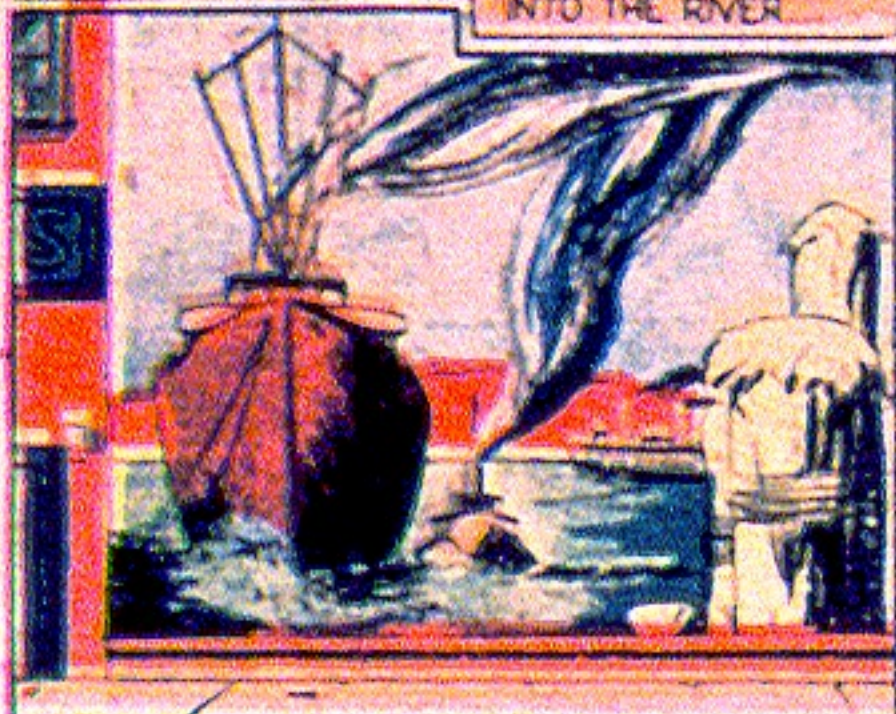
DAVID WILLNER



PALS OF FREEDOM



AT PIER FOURTEEN, A BRITISH FREIGHTER HEAVILY LOADED WITH WAR SUPPLIES MOVES SLOWLY OUT INTO THE RIVER.



SUDDENLY A MAN RACES ACROSS THE DOCK BRANDISHING A GUN!



HEY YOU! STOP!
STOP! YOU
CAN'T GO DOWN
THERE!

THE STARTLED GUARDS GIVE CHASE... THE MAN TURNS AND WITH MANIACAL FURY PUMPS A DEADLY HAIL OF BULLETS INTO THEIR BODIES.



BANG!
BANG!

YOU CAN'T DO
THAT... OOO...



HIA! I MADE IT! ...
WITH THIS VIAL
OF NITRO, I'LL
BLOW THAT
BRITISH FREIG-
HTER CLEAR
OUT OF THE
WATER!

EXERTING ALL HIS
STRENGTH, HE HURLS
THE DEADLY VIAL OUT
TOWARDS THE SHIP...

A SPLIT SECOND LATER THERE IS A TERRIFIC BLAST! FLAMES LEAP INTO THE AIR... LITERALLY TORN APART THE SHATTERED SECTIONS PLUNGE TO THE BOTTOM...



BOOM

HAI HA! EXCELLENT!
PERFECT! AND NOW
WITH THIS SECOND
VIAL I'LL DESTROY
THE ENTIRE
PIER!



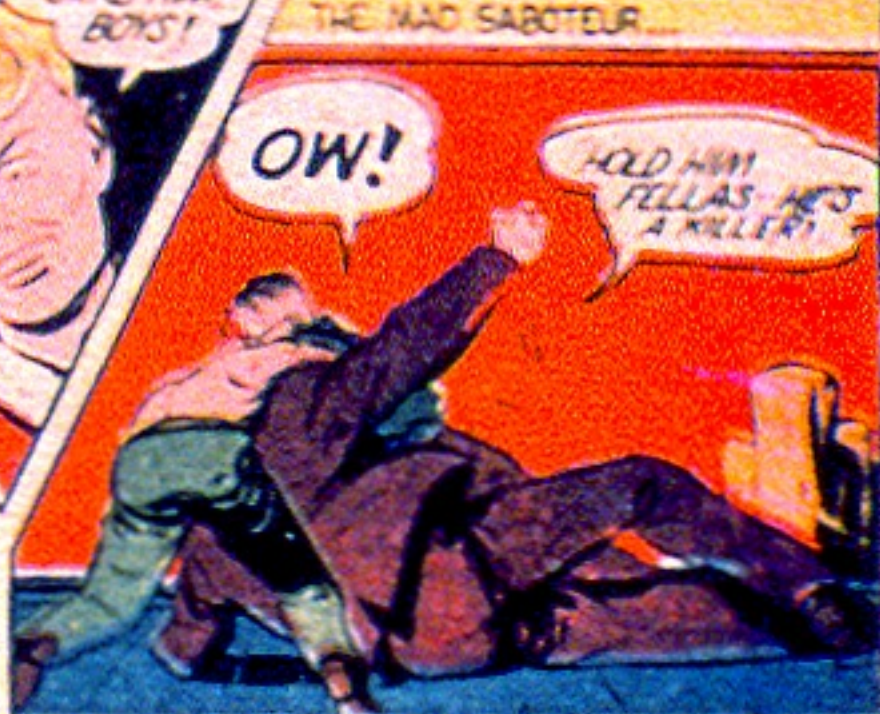
BRITISH LIAISON

ABOUT TO THROW A SECOND MISSILE. THE SABOTEUR IS STARTLED BY A WILD YELL...

AIEEEEEEEEE

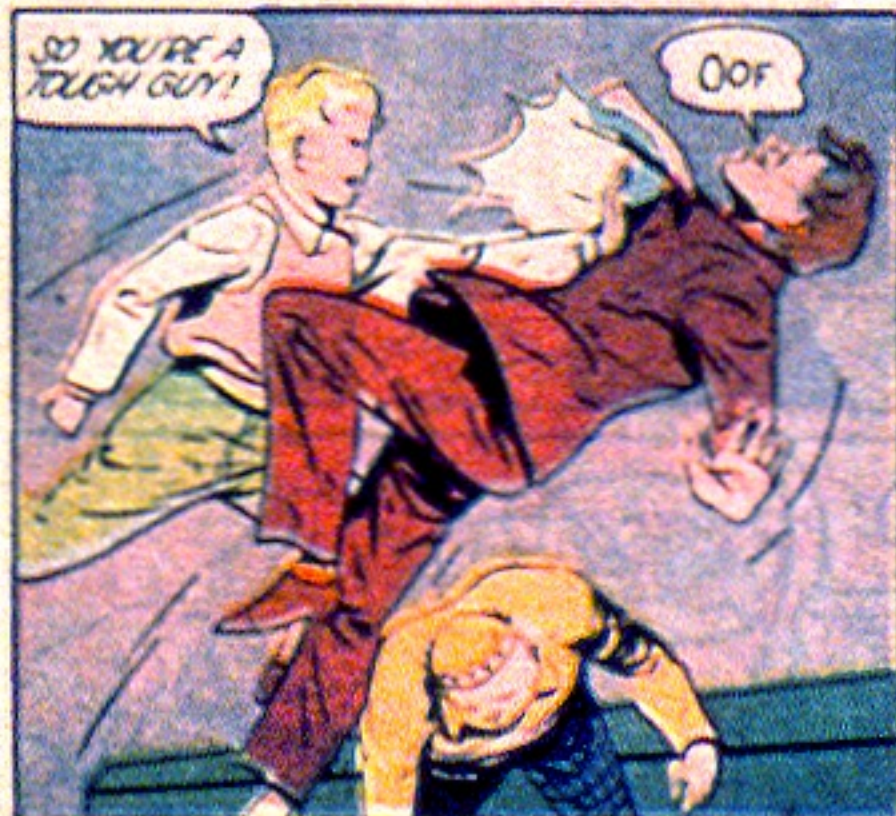
GRAB HIM BOYS!

...AND THREE YOUNGSTERS LEAD FROM THEIR HIDING PLACES AT THE MAD SABOTEUR...



OW!

HOLD HIM FELLAS - HE'S A KILLER!



SO YOU'RE A TOUGH GUY!

OOF



BOY HE'S OUT - COLDER THAN A HERRING!

HOW! I'LL SAY!

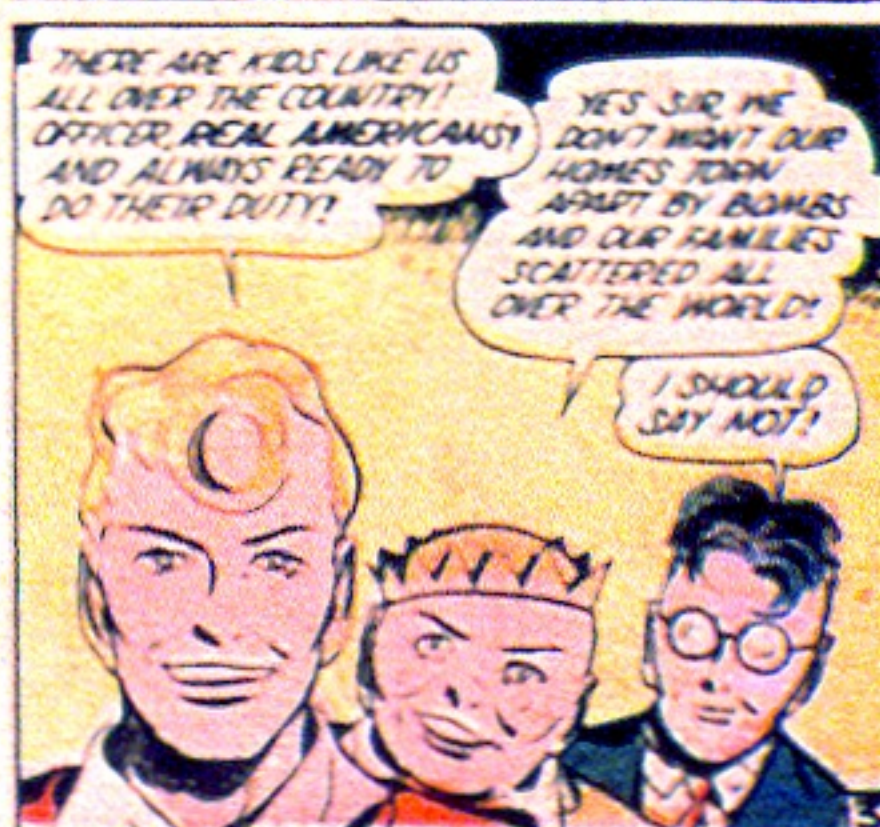
WHAT DID HE HIT HIM WITH - KICKS, A BURN?



GOOD WORK, BOYS! - YOU'VE DONE A FINE JOB NAILING THIS BIRD - I'M GOING TO SEE THAT YOU ARE WELL REWARDED!

WE DON'T WANT ANY REWARD!

I'LL SAY NOT! WE'RE AMERICANS - IT'S OUR DUTY TO PROTECT OUR COUNTRY!



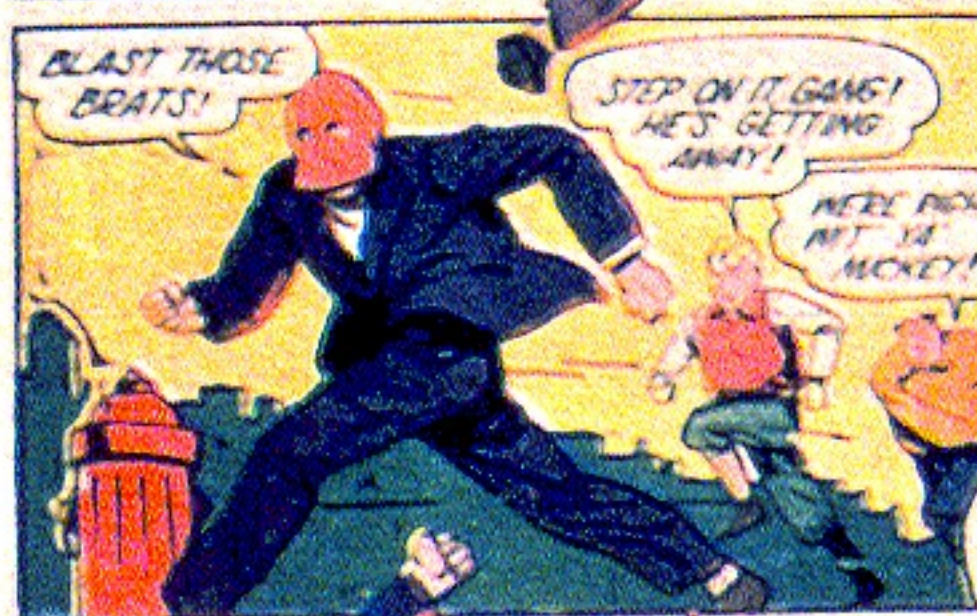
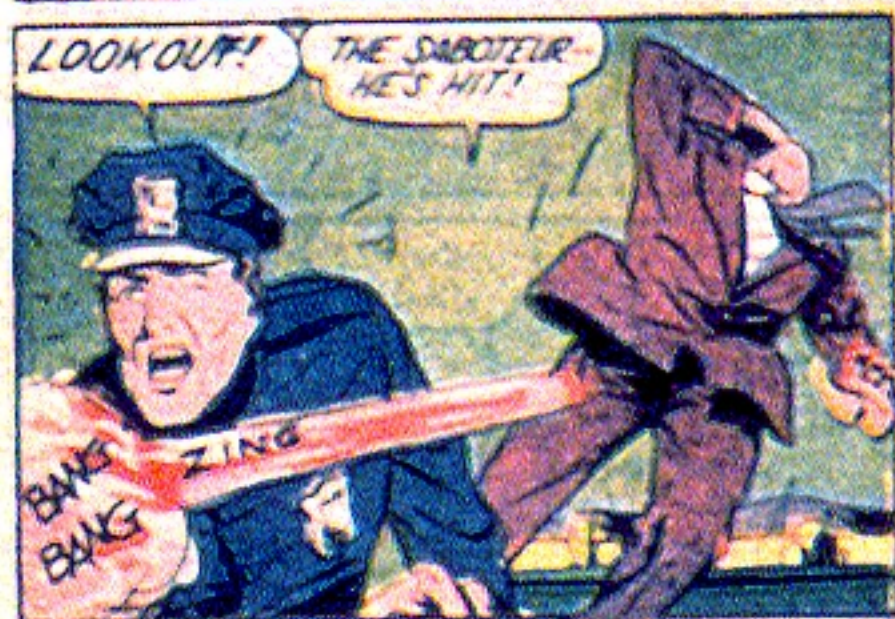
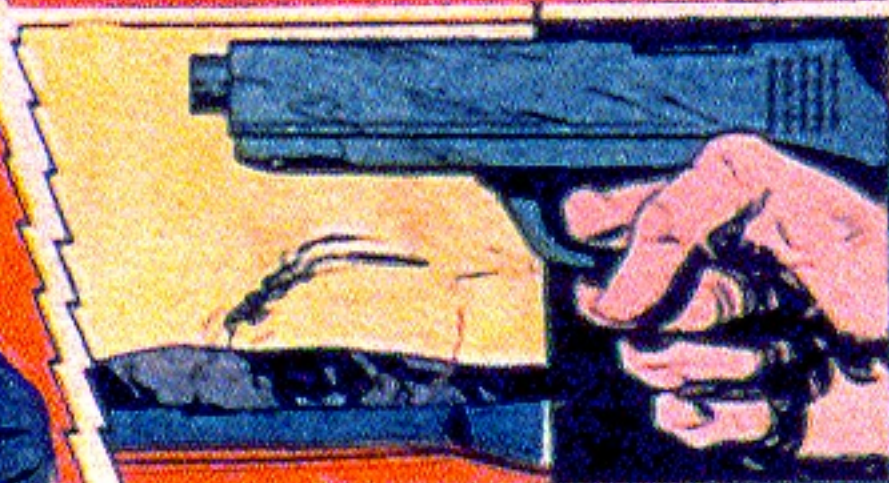
THERE ARE KIDS LIKE US ALL OVER THE COUNTRY! OFFICER, REAL AMERICANS! AND ALWAYS READY TO DO THEIR DUTY!

YES SIR, WE DON'T WANT OUR HOMES TORN APART BY BOMBS AND OUR FAMILIES SCATTERED ALL OVER THE WORLD!

I SHOULD SAY NOT!



FROM THE NEARBY SHADOWS OF THE WAREHOUSE, A GLOVED FINGER SLOWLY SQUEEZES THE TRIGGER OF A DEADLY AUTOMATIC.





HEY WHERE IS HE?

HEY-WHERE HE DROPPED!

HEY, HEY ALWAYS COME UP THREE TIMES WHEN HEY DROPPED!



HEY, WHAT'S THAT PAPER? MAYBE IT'S A CLUE!

PROBABLY IT FELL OUT OF HIS POCKET!



JEOPERS! IT'S IN CODE!

ETH URHO SI BE
RFD GHU ONO NO
ETH FTHU YDA FO
YEMBERNO...
XKOME SEMO
MONGBE OT ETH
EASTEROR
THERLANDFA
THE CRIMSON HODD



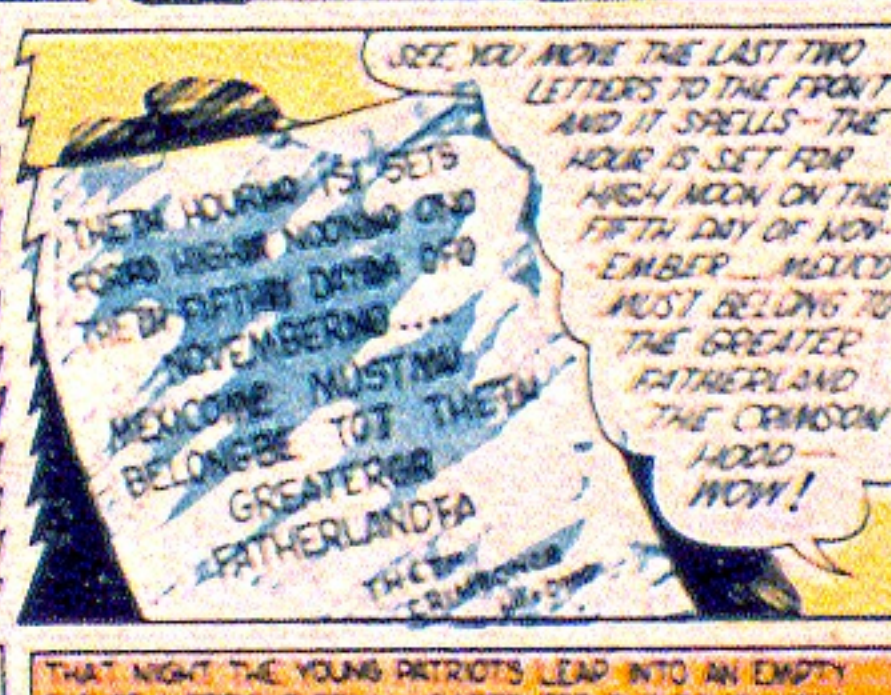
THIS IS SOMETHING! CHOW LET'S TRY AND DECODE IT!

IT LOOKS VERY COMPLICATED, INDEED!



AFTER HOURS OF DEEP CONCENTRATION WICKET SUDDENLY SHOUTS WITH JOY!

I GOT IT! I GOT IT! BOY, THIS IS EASY!



THEIR HOURNO IS SETS
FOOD HIGH NOONNO ONO
THE FIFTH DAYNO OFO
NOVEMBERNO...
MEXICOME MUSTNO
BELONGBE TOT THEIN
GREATEROR
FATHERLANDFA
THE CRIMSON HODD

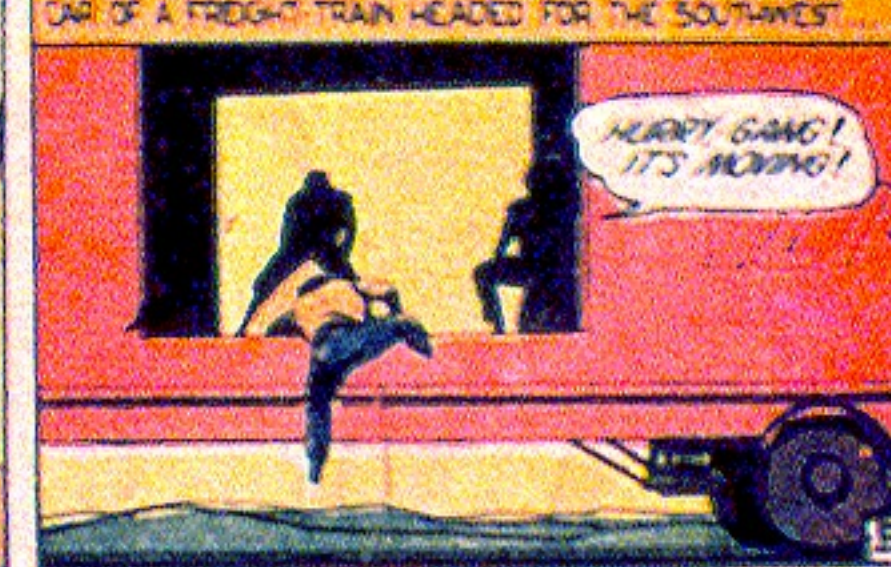
SEE, YOU MOVE THE LAST TWO LETTERS TO THE FRONT AND IT SPELLS--THE HOUR IS SET FOR HIGH NOON ON THE FIFTH DAY OF NOVEMBER... MEXICO MUST BELONG TO THE GREATER FATHERLAND THE CRIMSON HODD--NOW!



GEE, FELLOWS DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS? MEXICO IS GOING TO BE INVADED! WE'VE GOT TO GET THERE AND HELP STOP IT!

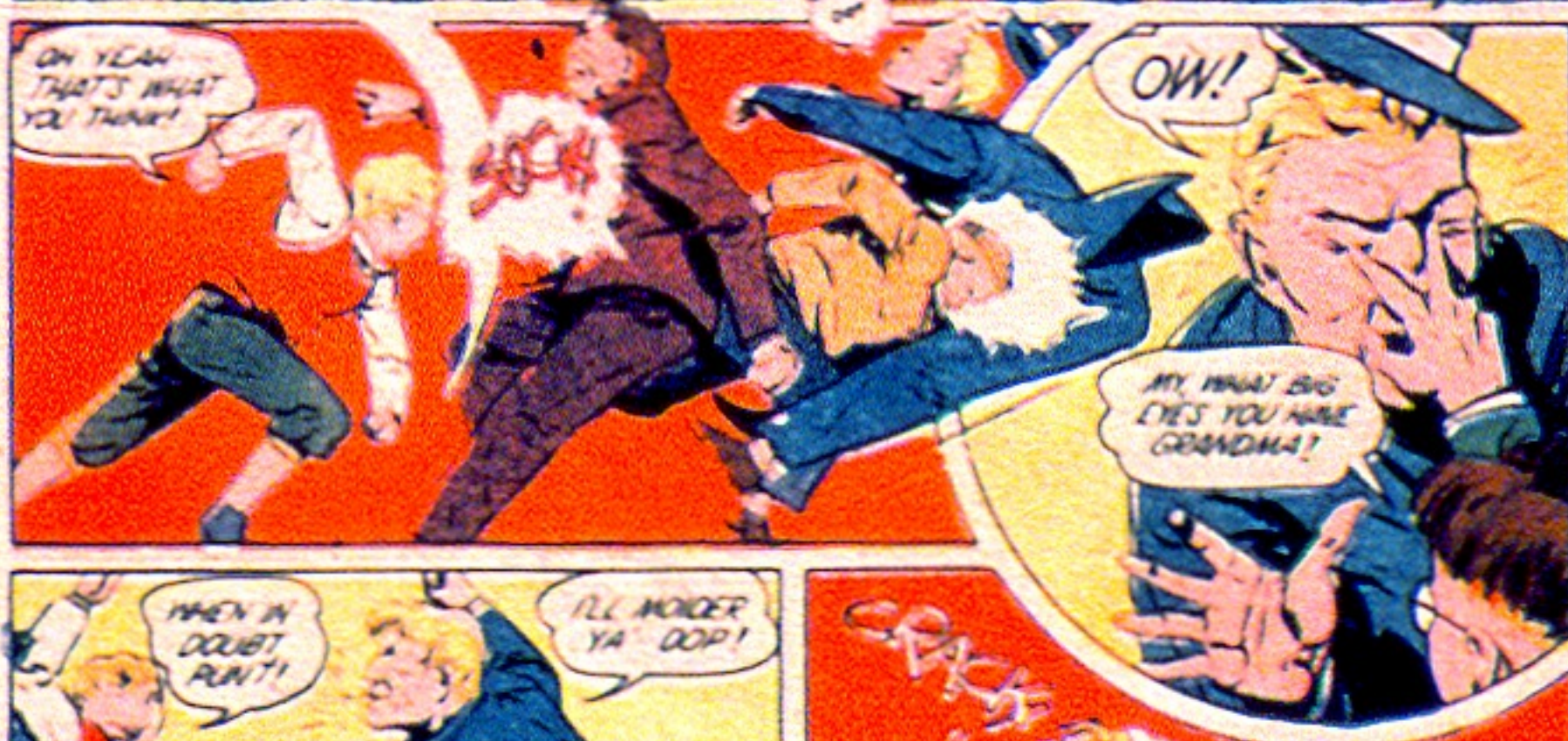
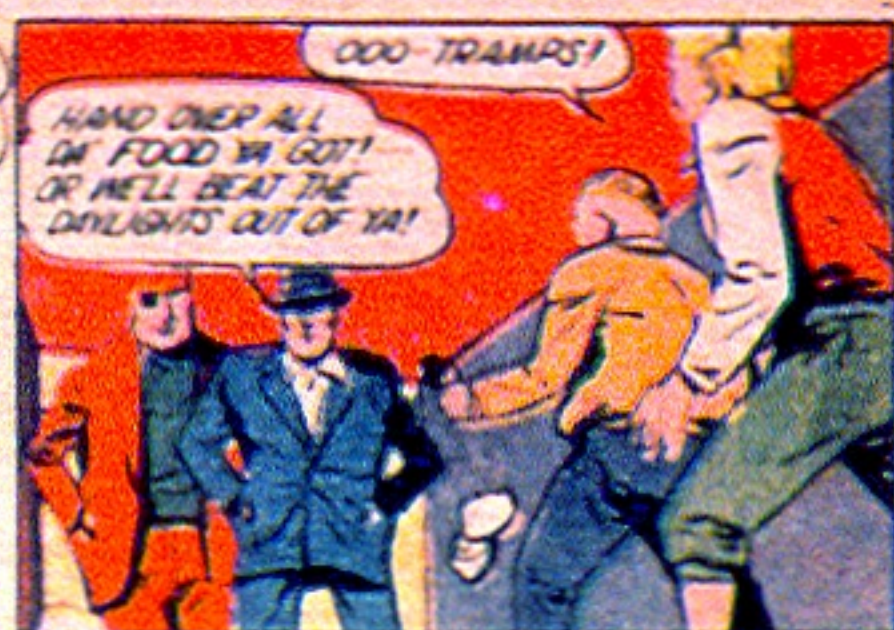
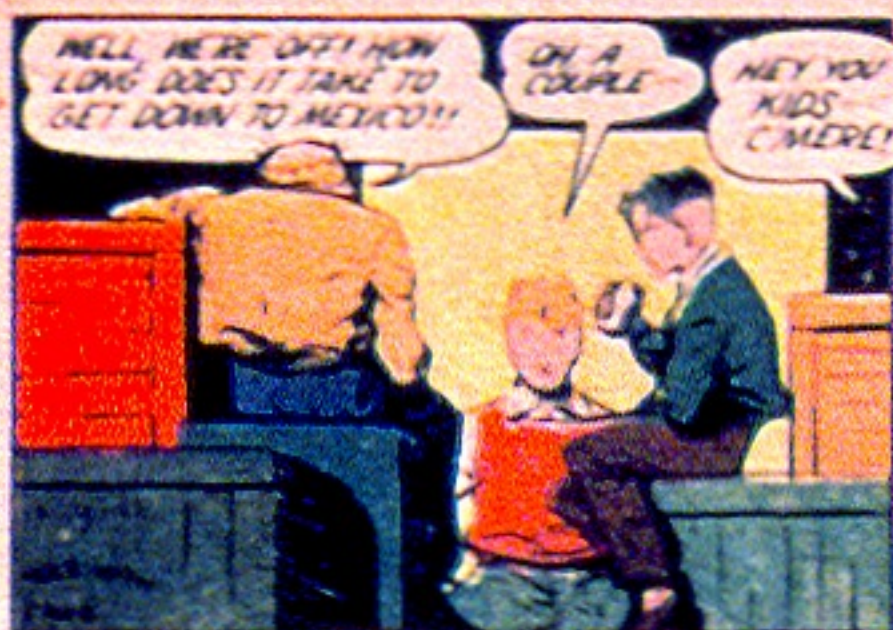
YOU ARE RIGHT--WE MUST JOIN THE GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY!

OH BOY! MEXICO, HERE WE COME!



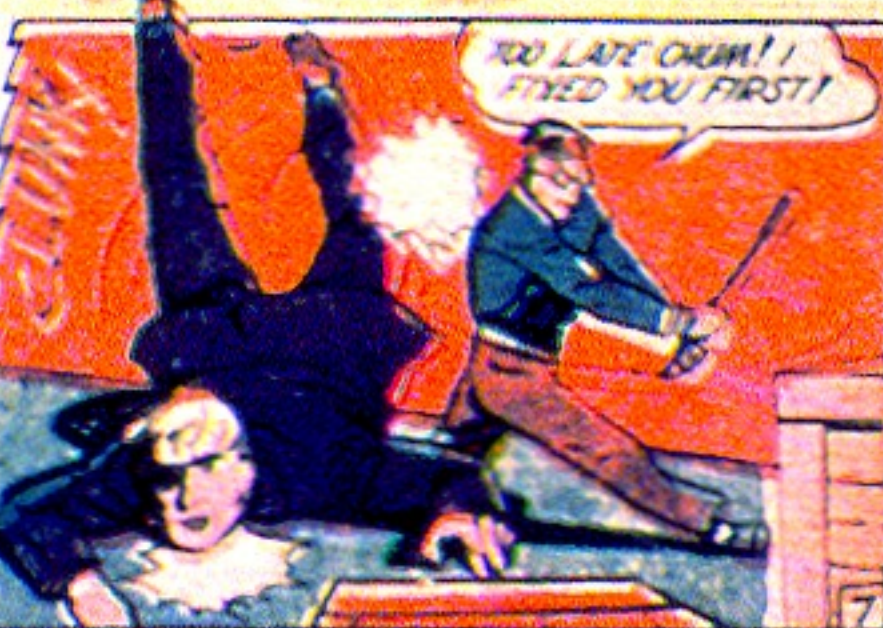
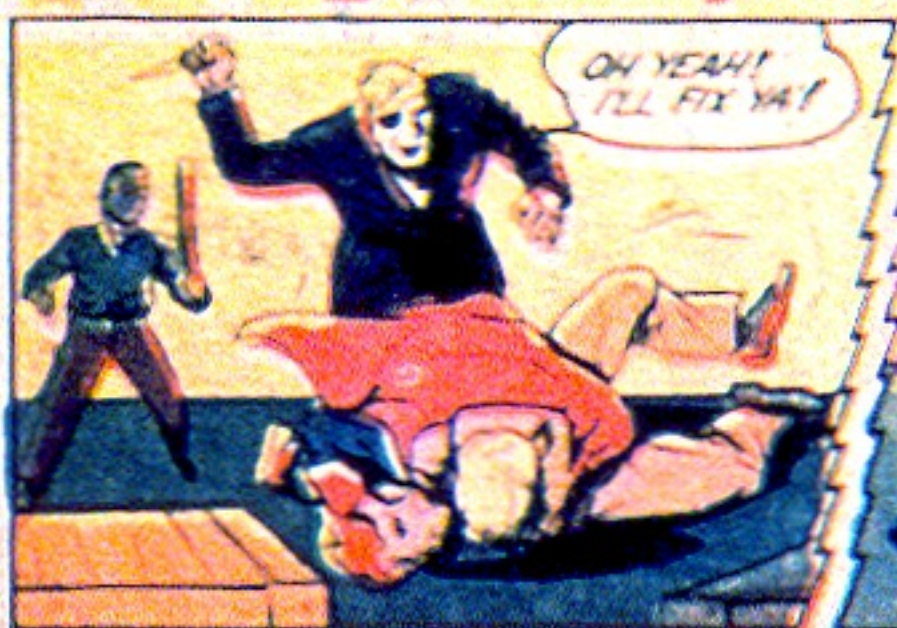
THAT NIGHT THE YOUNG PATRIOTS LEAP INTO AN EMPTY CAR OF A FREIGHT TRAIN HEADED FOR THE SOUTHWEST

HURRY GANG! IT'S MOVING!



SUDDENLY THREE MORE TRAMPS SWING DOWN INTO THE FREIGHT CAR...





FEED IT TO EM BOYS
THESE TRAMPS CAN'T
TAKE IT!

OOF!

THE NEWCOMER IS RIGHT! THE FIGHTING KIDS ARE
TOO MUCH FOR THEIR COWARDLY NATURES SO THE
TRAMPS BREAK AND RUN—



GEE YOU WERE GREAT!
YOU SAVED OUR NECKS—
HOW IN HECK DID YOU
HAPPEN TO
BE ON THIS
TRAIN!

I WAS TRAILING THOSE
BIRDS FROM NEW YORK.
WE HAVE REASON TO
BELIEVE THEY'RE
NAZI SPIES!

GEE, I WISH YOU COULD COME
WITH US! WE'RE GOING TO
MEXICO TO STOP AN INVASION
PLOT! WE HOPE, WE HOPE!

MY NAME IS RUSTY! I
WORK WITH THE FLAG-MAN!
HE'S DOING UNDERCOVER WORK
FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND I'M
HANDLING THIS ANGLE OF THE
CASE FOR HIM!

SURE, I'M WITH YOU
A HUNDRED PERCENT!



MEXICO! HERE
WE COME!

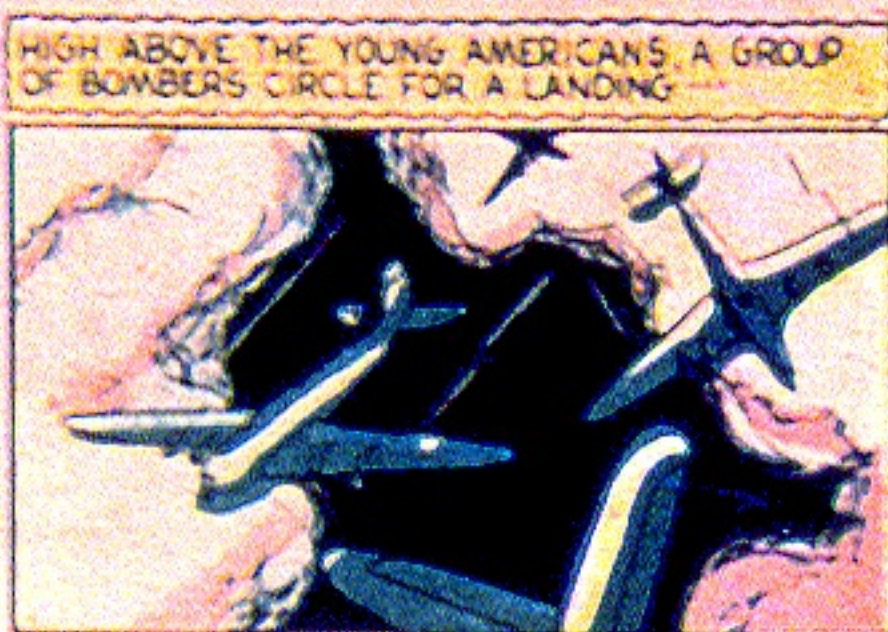
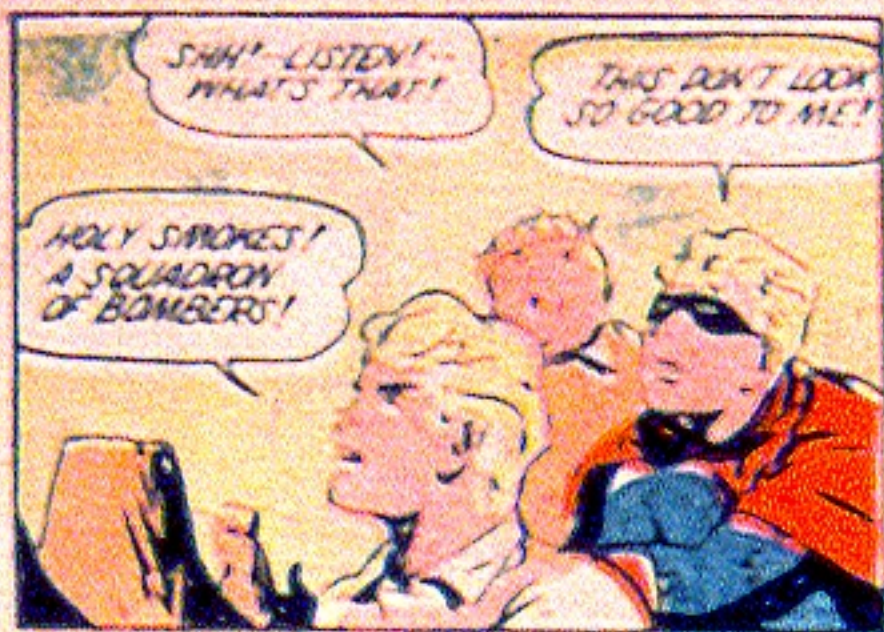
YIPEEEEEE!

A WEEK
LATER IN THE
BADLANDS OF
OLD MEXICO

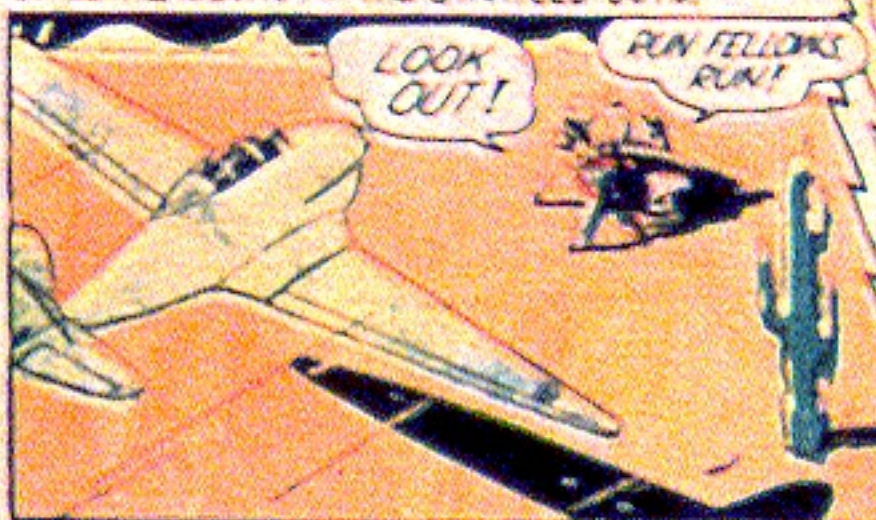
WELL, HERE WE
ARE FELLOWS!

YEAH, AND LUCKY MY
GOVERNMENT CREDENTIALS
GOT US PASSES INTO THIS
COUNTRY!

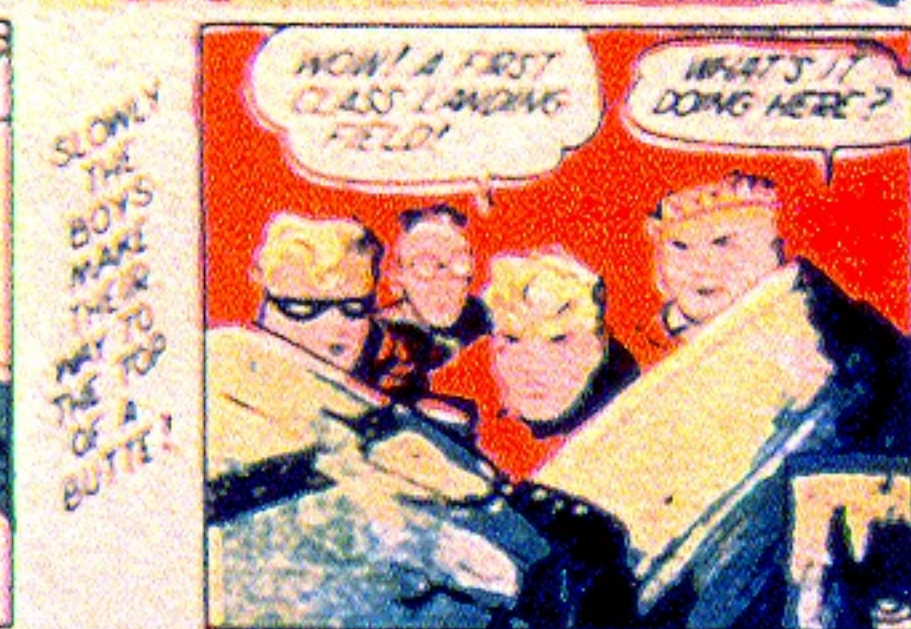




SUDDENLY FROM THE CLOUDS, A STUVA FIGHTER
DIVES HEADLONG AT THE STARTLED BOYS!



SEENING THE BOYS PRONE
IN THE GROUND, THE
MURDEROUS PILOT
BELIEVES HIS DEADLY
WORK IS DONE, AND
ZOOMS AWAY!

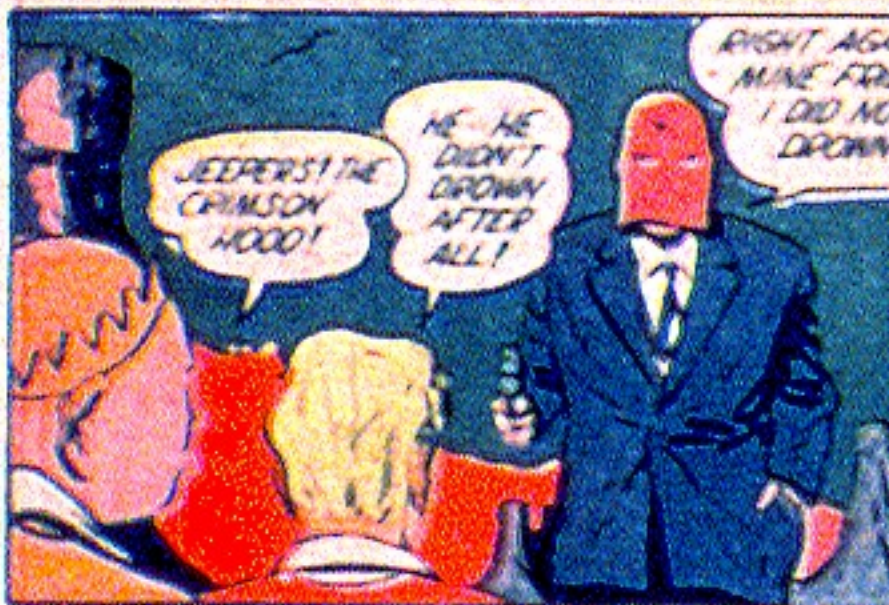


LINED UP ON THE FIELD BELOW THEM ARE
MESSERSCHWITTS, STUKAS AND GIANT HEINKELS!



BY GOLLY THIS MUST
BE THE PLACE WE'RE
LOOKING FOR!

YOU ARE RIGHT--
THIS IS THE PLACE
YOU ARE LOOKING
FOR AND IT'S TOO
BAD YOU FOUND IT!



JEEPERS! THE
CRIMSON
HOOD!

HE-- HE
DIDN'T
DROWN
AFTER
ALL!

RIGHT AGAIN,
MINE FRIENDS,
I DID NOT
DROWN!

I AM SICK AND TIRED
OF YOU INTRUDING ON
MY PLANS-- NOW GO!
I HAVE A NICE COZY
ROOM WAITING, BUT BARS!
AND YOU CAN WATCH THE
SHADOW OF THE SWASTIKA
COMPLETELY COVER MEXICO!



THE YOUNG AMERICANS ARE FORCED TO MARCH
TO A DARK DUNGEON DEEP BELOW THE SECRET NAZI
AIRPORT...



DON'T VILL KEEP
YOU OUT OF MINE
WAY UNTIL I
DECIDE NOT
TO DO ANY
YOU!

NOW WE'RE IN FOR
IT! HOW THE DICKENS
ARE WE GOIN' TO GET
OUT OF HERE?

TAKE IT EASY
FELLOWS, I'VE GOT
A CUTE LITTLE TRICK
THE DEACON TAUGHT
ME-- JUST WAIT!



THAT NIGHT, MICKEY PRODUCES A
SMALL PIECE OF WIRE AND WORKS
SWIFTLY ON THE LOCK...



GEE, THAT WAS SLICK
MICKEY! YOU'RE A
WIZ AT PICKING
LOCKS!



THANKS, RUSTY--
--QUIET NOW
NOT SO MUCH
NOISE-- OH
OH



PASSING A PARTLY OPENED WINDOW, MICKEY LISTENS IN ON A CONVERSATION...



IN BACK OF ARSENAL BUILDING TO CLIMB THE ROOF!



... DIRECTLY ABOVE THE GUARDS ... HE LEAPS!



YIPEEEEE!



NICE GOIN'! I GOT THIS KEY FROM ONE OF THEM!

PEANUTS, STAY HERE AND KEEP AN EYE ON EM!



DON'T WORRY, THEY WON'T MAKE UP-- I JUST KEEPS GIVIN' DEM A TREATMENT LIKE DIS, SEE?



INSIDE THE ARSENAL:

THAT'S THEM-- THE SILENT BOMBS! THEY LOOK JUST LIKE ANY OTHERS.



HOLY SMOKES, FELLOWS, THEY ONLY WEIGH ABOUT TEN POUNDS!

GOOD GOSH, M. BUCKEY! O-O-DON'T DROP IT!



SAY, I'VE GOT AN IDEA! THESE BOMBS ARE SO LIGHT EVEN WE CAN CARRY THEM-- HAVE I GOT AN IDEA!

I THINK I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE UP TO, BUCKEY!

FAR INTO THE NIGHT, SILENTLY THE YOUNG AMERICANS SLIP BACK AND FORTH TO THE ARSENAL CARRYING THE NEW WEAPONS TO THE TOP OF THE HILLS OVERLOOKING THE AIRPORT.

THIS SHOULD BE ENOUGH OF THEM, SURE! NOW WE'LL WAIT UNTIL RUSTY IS READY!

LUCKY PEANUTS TIED AND GAGGED THOSE GUARDS SO HE COULD HELP HIM!

ALSO ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE VALLEY...

THIS IS THE LAST OF THEM, PEANUTS!

BOY, DIS IS GOIN' TO BE FUN! WE'LL GIVE DEM NAZIS A TASTE OF THEIR OWN MEDICINE!

MEANWHILE DOWN BELOW, THE NAZIS SUDDENLY DISCOVER THEIR LOSS...

HIMMEL'S DOST KIDS HAVE ESCAPED AND NONE GOT! DER BOMBS ISS GONE!

YOU FOOLS! FIND THEM! BRING THEM BACK... I'LL HAVE THEIR HEADS FOR THIS!

BUT ON THE HILLS ABOVE, MICKEY WHISTLES SHRILLY!

O.K. SURE! LET'S GO! THROW HARD AND FAST!

RIGHT, MICKEY, HERE THEY GO!

RUSTY AND PEANUTS FOLLOW MICKEY'S SIGNAL

DIS IS GOIN' TO BEAT THE FOURTH OF JULY!

HEAVE 'EM, PEANUTS, AND DON'T MISS!

EARTHWARD THE FANTASTIC BOMBS SCREAM IN RAPID SUCCESSION—A BLINDING FLASH FOLLOWS—A MUFFLED RUMBLE OF CRUMBLING EARTH AND BUILDINGS—THEN SILENCE...



DOOMERHETTER! YE ARE DOOMED! ALL OUR WORK RUINED—DOSE YANKEE DEVILS, SOMEDAY I'LL GET THEM!



AS THE ROAD OF THE EDULO SIONS EDG UP AND DOWN THE VALLEY THE YOUNG AMERICANS CONTINUE TO HURL BOMB AFTER BOMB AT THE SHAMBLES OF THE NAZI AIRPORT!

AND AS DAWN APPEARS IN THE EASTERN SKY IT REVEALS A TWISTED MASS OF SMOLDERING RUINS!



LATER WHEN THE YOUNG AMERICANS UNITE



WELL FELLOWS THAT DID THE TRICK! I DON'T THINK THOSE SOES WILL ATTEMPT ANOTHER STUNT LIKE THAT IN A HURRY!

YEP! THE CRIMSON HOOB IS FINISHED. WE'LL NEVER BE BOTHERED WITH HIM AGAIN!

SUDDENLY A MEXICAN PATROL PLANE DIPS OUT OF THE SKY



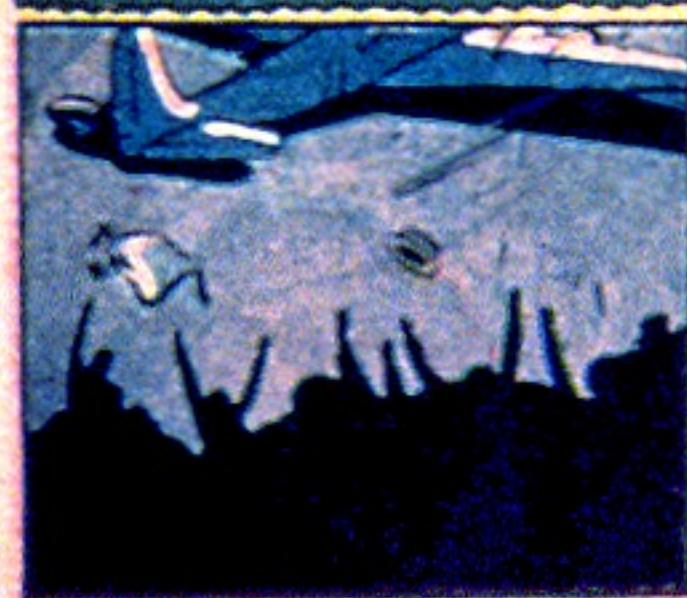
HEY!—A MEXICAN PLANE LOOK!

QUICKLY THE PLANE LANDS NEARBY THE BOYS RUSH TO MEET IT AND HURRIEDLY EXPLAIN WHAT HAS HAPPENED



BOYS I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU COULD HAVE DONE IT—WE CAN NEVER REPAY YOU! YOUR HEROIC DEED WILL LIVE FOREVER IN THE HEARTS OF OUR PEOPLE! MEXICO SALUTES YOU!

A FEW DAYS LATER AT A PRINCIPLE AIR PORT THOUSANDS OF GRATEFUL MEXICANS TURN OUT TO CHEER THE YOUNG AMERICANS AS THEY BOARD A PLANE FOR HOME



... AND AS THE PLANE TAKES OFF

WELL SO LONG READERS WE'LL BE SEEING YOU LATER ON IN THE BOOK BOY WILL THE DEACON AND THE FLAG-MAN GET A KICK OUT OF US DOIN' THIS JOB ALL BY OURSELVES. AND IF WE DO SAY IT IT WAS A NEAT TRICK!



WATCH FOR RUSTY MICKEY SPEC AND PEANUTS IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF AERO COMICS AND ALSO TO BE FEATURED IN THE ALL NEW KID KOMICS! THE GREATEST OF ALL ADVENTURE STORIES TO BE ON THE NEWSSTANDS SHORTLY! WATCH FOR KID KOMICS

SOLAR

MASTER
OF
MAGIC

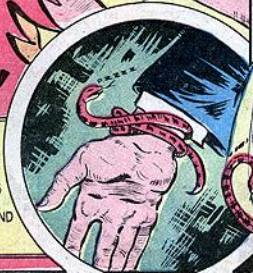
BY SAUL
ROSEN



SOLAR, THE
FAMOUS MAN OF
MYSTERY AND MASTER
OF MAGIC PITS THE WIZARDRY
OF THE AGES AGAINST THE
FORCES OF CRIME AND EVIL...

THE CASE of the VANISHING DANCERS!

THIS STORY OPENS IN A
WELL-KNOWN NIGHT CLUB
JUST OFF TIMES SQUARE...
THE USUAL GAIETY OF
NIGHT LIFE IS IN PROGRESS
WHEN SUDDENLY A SMALL
GARTER SNAKE APPEARS AND
CURLS ITSELF AROUND A
MAN'S WRIST!



WHY, TONY-- SUCH A NICE WRIST WATCH-- YOU COULD HAVE BROKEN IT!

OH, HELLO MISS ANDREWS, AND YOU SOLAR-- UP TO YOUR OLD TRICKS, EH? COME INTO MY OFFICE-- I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU!



IN THE OFFICE OF TONY RANDO, OWNER OF THE NIGHT CLUB:

THANKS FOR OFFERING ME THAT JOB IN YOUR FLOOR SHOW TONY, BUT AFTER ALL, I'M ONLY AN AMATEUR MAGICIAN. YOU HAVE A SWEET SHOW WITH THE MOST POPULAR BAND IN THE COUNTRY-- WHY HAVE ME SPOIL IT?

IT'S NOT THAT, SOLAR, I'M IN TROUBLE-- READ THIS!



BILL GORRY, THE POPULAR BAND LEADER, INTRODUCES THE NEXT ACT--

ARE YOU HAVING A SWEET TIME, FOLKS? WELL, YOU AIN'T SEEN NUTHIN' YET! WE PRESENT THE MASTER MAGICIAN OF ALL TIME-- THE GREAT, THE STUPENDOUS, ONE AND ONLY-- SOLAR-- SLAP THOSE PALMS!



I'VE BEEN GETTING THESE FOR A WEEK-- STRANGELY ENOUGH, IT IS THE THIRD GIRL FROM THE LEFT THAT IS ALWAYS THREATENED, EVEN THOUGH I'VE BEEN SWITCHING THEM AROUND EVERY NIGHT... IF YOU'RE IN THE SHOW, YOU WON'T CREATE ANY SUSPICION BY BEING AROUND AND KEEPING YOUR EYES OPEN!

O.K. WHEN DOES THE SHOW START?



IN FIVE MINUTES!

WATCH SOLAR WOW EM!



F-FOLKS, I'M SORRY-- I FORGOT M-MY TOOLS!



WHY YOU! MAKING ME LOOK FOOLISH, EH? BEAT IT!

S-SURE MR. G-GORRY!

HO! HO!

HA! HA!

HA! HA!

HE MUST BE A PLUMBER!

HO! HE!



GOSH, SOLAR, WHAT HAPPENED?

I GUESS I DIDN'T DO SO HOT!

SORRY FOLKS, PLEASE ACCEPT
MY HUMBLE APOLOGIES--INSTEAD
WE PRESENT OUR OWN VERSION
OF "THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE"
HEH, HEH---GET IT?



HEY!
WHAT THE--



HA, HA--
YOU'RE
TICKLING
ME!



POP!

POP!



EEEK!

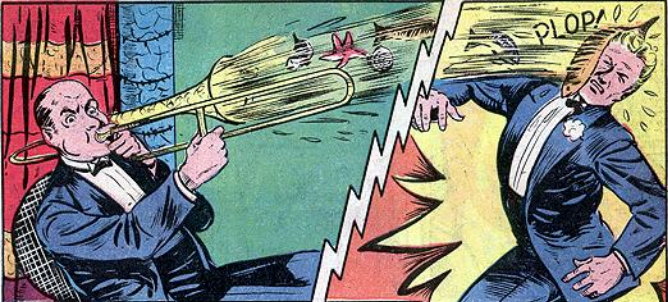
EEEK!
EEEK!



ROAR!



WHAT THE!
SOUP!



HEH, HEH, FOLKS--WHAT DID I TELL YOU---ISN'T HE GREAT?

WELL LINDA, NOTHING HAS HAPPENED SO FAR-- I GUESS IT WAS JUST A FALSE ALARM!

STILL--I WOULDN'T WANT TO BE IN JUDY'S SHOES!



LATER AFTER THE SHOW:



TONY I JUST GOT YOUR MESSAGE-- WHAT'S WRONG!?

JUDY'S DISAPPEARED! SHE DIDN'T EVEN SHOW UP AT THE DRESSING ROOM AFTER THE SHOW. I JUST FOUND A NOTE THREATENING THE THIRD GIRL ON THE LEFT IN TOMORROW NIGHT'S SHOW-- I'M GIVING UP--I'M LETTING GORBY'S BAND GO!



I HAVE AN IRON-CLAD CONTRACT WITH GORRY FOR THIRTY WEEKS AT A THOUSAND PER... I'LL HAVE TO PAY HIM OFF AND LOSE THE MOST POPULAR BAND TO DAY... IT'LL RUIN ME, BUT I CAN LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO ANY MORE OF THE GIRLS!

MR. RANDO, I'LL TAKE JUDY'S PLACE... WITH A LOT OF PRACTICE TO-MORROW, I'LL LEARN THE ROUTINE...!

AND YOU SAID YOU'D HATE TO BE IN JUDY'S SHOES

THE NEXT NIGHT SOLAR PERFORMS...

...AND LINDA DANCES:

AFTER THE SHOW AS THE GIRLS FILE OFF, SOLAR SLIPS ON HIS CAPE OF MYSTERY AND FADES INTO THE BACKGROUND ---

IN THE DEEP-SHADOWED HALLWAY, A GLOVED HAND STIFLES LINDA'S CRY... SHE SILENTLY DISAPPEARS ---

SOLAR SLIDES INTO A SECRET PASSAGEWAY...

AND THEN IN A DIMLY LIT ROOM...

YOU LET ME GO, YOU BRUTE!

SORRY SISTER, I'M JUST WORKIN' FOR A LIVING... NOW BE NICE WHILE WE TIE YOU UP!

LATER... THE MASKED LEADER ENTERS:

O.K. BOYS, WE'LL BUMP THESE DAMES OFF AND DELIVER THEM TO RANDO... SAY YOUR PRAYERS, JUDY!

NO! NO! NO! PLEASE!

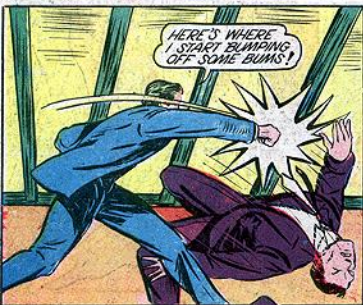
THE GUN BECOMES A BOUQUET OF FLOWERS... A HORNET SWOOPS UNDER THE LEADER'S HANDKERCHIEF...



FRANTICALLY HE RIPS THE HANDKERCHIEF AWAY TO REVEAL THE FACE OF BILL GORRY!



SOLAR DISCARDS HIS CAPE OF MYSTERY AND BECOMES VISIBLE!



GORRY WAS AN UNKNOWN WHEN HE SIGNED UP WITH RANDO... I'VE BROUGHT HIM BIG MONEY OFFERS... HE FIGURED ON SCAMPING RANDO OUT OF BUSINESS, THEREBY NULLIFYING HIS CONTRACT AND COLLECTING A NEAT THIRTY THOUSAND... PICKING ON THE THIRDS GIRL FROM THE LEFT WAS ONLY TO MAKE IT MORE MYSTERIOUS, I GUESS... SIMPLE, EH?

READ ANOTHER AMAZING ADVENTURE WITH "SOLAR" IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF CAPTAIN AERO COMICS

Absolutely FREE!

Special to the readers of THIS MAGAZINE

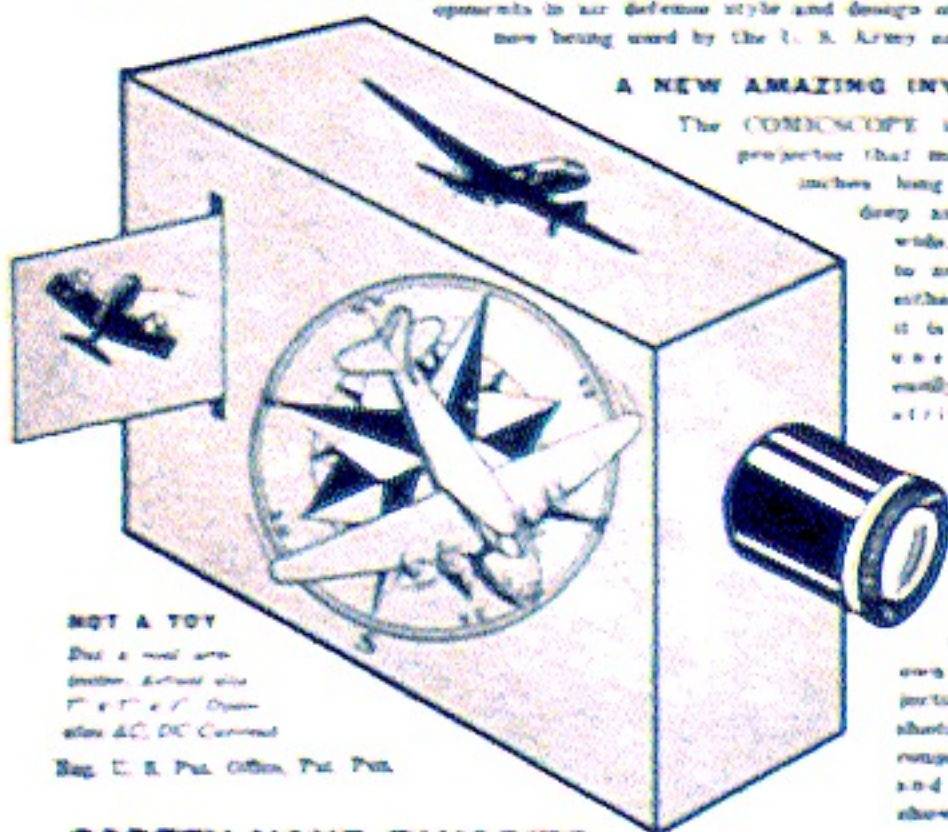
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